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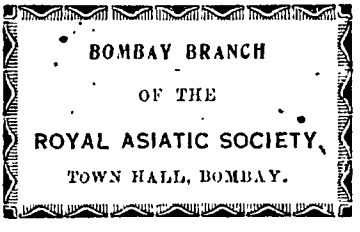

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SOCIALISM

SOCIALISM

BY

ROBERT FLINT

PROFESSOR IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

SECOND EDITION

(*Revised*)

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PRINTED BY SIR ISAAC PITMAN
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AND NEW YORK 1908

PREFACE

In presenting a New Edition of Professor Flint's treatise on Socialism, every care has been taken to preserve as much of the original as possible. The arguments which he has advanced still remain as weighty as when they were first put forward, and are worthy of the careful consideration of all those who are students of the present movement, whether their attitude towards Socialism is favourable or adverse. Events, however, have moved very rapidly during the last fifteen years, and certain statements contained in the text of the former Edition have become obviously out of date. What have turned out to be errors have been corrected; but otherwise it has not been considered necessary to make any great changes in the main body of the book.

The recent literature on Socialism has been connected, in the main, with matters which are foreign to the character of this work, and has, therefore, been generally ignored. The few additional footnotes are indicated by the use of square brackets. Some of the Supplementary Notes are in part re-written. The Appendix gives the official programme of the principal socialistic organisations.

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SOCIALISM

CHAPTER I

WHAT IS SOCIALISM?

SOCIALISM is undoubtedly spreading. It is, therefore, right and expedient that its teachings, its claims, its tendencies, its accusations, and its promises should be honestly and seriously examined. There may, indeed, be persons who think that to treat of it at all is unwise, and will only help to propagate it. Such is not my opinion. It seems to me that there are good and true elements in Socialism; and these I wish to see spread, and hope that discussion will contribute to their diffusion. There are also, in my judgment, bad and false elements in Socialism; and I have not so poor an opinion of human nature as to believe that the more these are scrutinised the more will they be admired.

I propose to discuss Socialism in a way that will be intelligible to working men. It appeals specially to them. It is above all their cause that its advocates undertake to plead, and their sympathies that they seek to gain. It is on the ground that it alone satisfies the claims of justice in relation to the labouring classes that Socialists urge the acceptance of their system. I cast no doubt on the sincerity of their professions or the purity of their motives in this respect. I believe that Socialism has its deepest and strongest root in a desire for the welfare of the masses who toil hard and gain little. I grant freely that it has had among its adherents many men of the stuff of which heroes and martyrs are made; men who have given up all to which ordinary men cling most tenaciously, and who have welcomed obloquy and persecution, poverty and death itself, for what they deem the cause of righteousness and brotherhood. But the best-intentioned men are sometimes greatly mistaken; and Socialism might prove the reverse of a blessing to working men, although those who are pressing it on them may mean them well. At all events, those who are so directly appealed to regarding it seem specially called to try to form

as correct a judgment on it as they can, and to hear what can be said both against it and for it.

That is all the more necessary because of what Socialism aims at and undertakes to do. It is not a system merely of amendment, improvement, and reform. On the contrary, it distinctly pronounces every system of that sort to be inadequate, and seeks to produce an entire renovation of society, to effect a revolution of momentous magnitude. It does not propose simply to remedy defects in the existing condition of our industrial and social life. It holds that condition to be essentially wrong, radically unjust, and, therefore, demands that its whole character shall be changed; that society shall organise itself on entirely different principles from those on which it has hitherto rested; and that it shall proceed on quite new lines and in quite another direction. Now, any very busy man may, perhaps, with some fair measure of reason, excuse himself from coming to any decision at all on so radical and ambitious, so vast and sweeping a scheme; but certainly any person advised or inclined to entertain it should very seriously discuss it before committing himself to it; and any one asked to accept it should think oftener than twice before he assents to its teaching.

We have no right, it is true, to assume that the existing order of society will not pass away, or that the new order which Socialism recommends will not displace it. All history is a process of incessant change, and so a continuous protest against the conservatism which would seek to perpetuate any present. But neither is it a series of revolutions. Rather is it a process of evolution in which revolution is rare and exceptional. It is doubtful if any of the violent revolutions of history might not have been averted, with advantage to mankind, by timely and gradual reforms. There is certainly a legitimate presumption against readily believing in the necessity or desirableness of social revolution.

The term "Socialism" is not yet eighty years old. It is a disputed point whether it first arose in the school of Owen; whether it was invented by Pierre Leroux, the author of a system known as "Humanitarianism;" or whether it had for its author Louis Reybaud, a well-known publicist and a severe critic of Socialism.*

J. S. Mill, in his "Political Economy," says "the word originated

[* See his "Études sur les Réformateurs Modernes."]

among the English Communists,"* but he adduces no evidence for the statement, and does not assign a date to the alleged origination. Mr. Kirkup, in his "History of Socialism," tells us that it was "coined in England in 1835." † In proof he merely refers to the following statement in Mr. Holyoake's "History of Co-operation" (vol. i., p. 210, ed. 1875): "The term Socialism was first introduced on the formation of the Society of All Classes of All Nations, the members of which came to be known as socialists." But the statement is self-contradictory. If the members of the Society referred to only "*came to be known as socialists*" the term Socialism was certainly *not* "*first introduced on the formation of the Society,*" but *after the Society had been formed.* ‡ How long after? That Mr. Holyoake has not told us; nor has he supported his statement by any confirmatory quotations or references. The term Socialism may, perhaps, have originated in England, may even, perhaps, have been coined there in 1835; but, so far as I am aware, no evidence has been adduced that such was the case, nor any information afforded as to how the term was employed by those who are said to have first used it in England. The matter still remains in doubt, but will most probably be eventually cleared up by some independent inquirer.

M. Leroux claimed‖ to have originated the word with the design of opposing it to "Individualism," a term which came somewhat earlier into use; and there is nothing improbable in the claim, but M. Reybaud certainly preceded him in the employment of the word in print. He first made use of it in August, 1836, when he began a series of articles on "Modern Socialists" in the *Revue des Deux Mondes.* He employed it as a general term for the same group of systems which had been previously designated "Industrialism" by D'Eckstein and some other French writers. §

The word rapidly gained currency, because it was generally felt

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* Book II., ch. i., sec. 2.

[† P. 3.—But in his "Inquiry into Socialism" (p. 2), the third edition of which was published in 1907, Mr. Kirkup says the word "appears to have been first used in the 'Poor Man's Guardian' in 1833."]

‡ From October, 1836, onwards the terms "Socialist" and "Socialism" are of frequent occurrence in "The New Moral World," conducted by Robert Owen and his disciples.

‖ In the "Journal des Économistes," July, 1878.

§ In Littré's Dictionary we find no information as to the history of either the term *Socialisme* or *Individualisme.*

to be required in order to denote the schemes of social organisation which had been cropping up in France from the beginning of the century, and which, between 1836 and 1848, appeared, as De Tocqueville said, "almost every morning like mushrooms that had grown up during the night." Thus we have got the word, and we are not likely to lose it from want of occasions of hearing it, or of opportunities of using it.

A definition of Socialism may be demanded, and one which will satisfy both Socialists and their opponents. I not only do not pretend to give any such definition, but consider it unreasonable to ask for it. If Socialists and anti-Socialists could agree at starting they would not fall out by the way. The whole controversy between them has for its end to determine whether the relevant facts —the doctrines, proposals, and practices of what avows itself to be, and is generally called, Socialism — warrant its being defined as something essentially good or as something essentially bad. The adherents and the opponents of Socialism must necessarily define it in contrary ways; and no further agreement can reasonably be expected from them at the outset than agreement so to define it as to express their respective views of its nature, and then to proceed to examine honestly whether the facts testify for or against their respective definitions.

Were it only because it is important to see clearly the vanity of expecting as much from definitions of Socialism as is generally done, it seems desirable to refer to some of those which have been proposed. The great French Dictionary—the Dictionary of the Academy—thus defines it: "The doctrine of men who pretend to change the State, and to reform it on an altogether new plan." This definition makes nothing clear except that the Academicians were not Socialists. There is nothing necessarily socialistic in pretending to change the state of society and to reform it; nothing precise in saying "on an altogether new plan," unless the character of the plan is indicated, for it might be new and yet not socialistic, but anti-socialistic; and no warrant even for representing socialistic plans as "altogether new," they being in reality, for the most part, very old. The French Academy's definition of Socialism is, in fact, very like the medical student's famed definition of the lobster, as "a red fish which moves backwards"—the creature being neither a fish, nor red, nor moving backwards.

Littré in his Dictionary often succeeded where the Academicians failed, but not when he gave the following as a definition of Socialism: "A system which, regarding political reforms as of subordinate importance, offers a plan of social reform." This is, if possible, worse. It is to identify Socialism with social reform, than which nothing can be more inaccurate. Socialism generally claims to be social revolution, and not merely social reform. It is by no means a characteristic of Socialism to subordinate the political to the social. The most advanced Socialism seeks to revolutionise society by political means, by the power of the State. No class of men believe more than socialists do in the possibility of making men good and happy by Acts of Parliament—are more under the influence of what Mr. Herbert Spencer called "the great political superstition."

Passing over many other definitions let us come at once to those used by Mr. Hyndman and the late Mr. Bradlaugh in their debate at St. James's Hall, April 17th, 1884, on the question, "Will Socialism benefit the English people?" Mr. Hyndman's was, "Socialism is an endeavour to substitute for the anarchical struggle or fight for existence an organised co-operation for existence." Well, Socialism may be that; yet that cannot be an accurate and adequate definition of Socialism. Few will deny that men ought to substitute organisation for anarchy, and co-operation for struggling or fighting, whenever they can do so consistently with their independence and freedom. But there is the point. Socialists have no monopoly of appreciation of organised co-operation. It is not in this respect that the great majority of people differ from them; it is that they are unwilling to be organised at the cost of their liberty; that they wish to be free to determine on what conditions they are to co-operate; that they do not see how the organised co-operation suggested is to be realised, except through a despotism to which they are not prepared to submit.

Mr. Bradlaugh succeeded much better, and, indeed, as against Mr. Hyndman, perfectly. "Socialism," he said, "denies individual private property and affirms that society organised as the State should own all wealth, direct all labour, and compel the equal distribution of all produce." This is a good definition of the Socialism of the Social Democratic Federation. It is a good definition, one may perhaps even say, of all self-consistent political

Socialism which is likely to be of much political significance. But there are many forms of Socialism which are not self-consistent, and many more which are never likely to have any political influence. There is a Socialism which limits its dislike to "individual private property," as property in land. There is a Socialism which deems that the State should appropriate the wealth of individuals only when their wealth is beyond a certain amount. There is a Socialism, as Leroy-Beaulieu observes, which would allow the mistress of a household to be the proprietress of a sewing-needle, but by no means of a sewing-machine. And there is much Socialism which would not go the length of Communism and "compel the equal distribution of all produce." So that Mr. Bradlaugh's definition, although a good working definition for the occasion, and not logically assailable by his opponent, is not co-extensive with, nor applicable to, all forms of the thing sought to be defined.

Perhaps M. Leroux, who professed to have invented the word Socialism, came as near as any one has done towards correctly defining it. He was what most people would call a Socialist, but he did not deem himself such, and did not use the term to denote a true system. He opposed it, as he said, to Individualism, and so he defined it as "a political organisation in which the individual is sacrificed to society." The definition may be improved by the omission of the word "political," for the obvious reason that there may be, and has been, a Socialism not political but religious. The most thoroughgoing Socialism in the past has generally been of a religious kind. Where the entire sacrifice of the will and the interests of the individual to the ends of a community are demanded, as in Communism, the only motive sufficiently strong to secure it for any considerable length of time, even in a small society, is the religious motive.

Socialism, then, as I understand it, is any theory of social organisation which sacrifices the legitimate liberties of individuals to the will or interests of the community. I do not think we can get much farther in the way of definition. The thing to be defined is of its very nature vague, and to present what is vague as definite is to misrepresent it. No definition of Socialism at once true and precise has ever been given, or ever will be given. For Socialism is essentially indefinite, indeterminate. It is a tendency and

movement towards an extreme. It may be very great or very small; it may manifest itself in the most diverse social and historical connections; it may assume, and has assumed, a multitude of forms. It may show itself merely in slight interferences with the liberties of very small classes of individuals; or it may demand that no individual shall be allowed to be a capitalist or a proprietor, a drawer of interest or a taker of rent; or be entitled even to have a wife or children to himself. It is the opposite of Individualism, which is similarly variable and indeterminate in its nature, so that it may manifest itself merely by rather too much dread of over-legislation, or may go so far as to seek the suppression of all government and legislation. Socialism is the exaggeration of the rights and claims of society, just as Individualism is the exaggeration of the rights and claims of individuals. The latter system rests on excessive or exclusive faith in individual independence; the former system rests on excessive or exclusive faith in social authority. Both systems are one-sided and sectarian —as most "isms" are.

According to this view, there may be much truth in Socialism, as there may be much truth in Individualism, but there cannot be either a true Socialism or a true Individualism. The truth lies between them, yet is larger than either. The true doctrine of society must include the truth, while excluding the error, both of Individualism and of Socialism. It must be a doctrine which, while fully recognising all the just claims of society, fully acknowledges also all the rights of the individuals composing society. The Socialist, of course, supposes his Socialism to be just such a doctrine, and he may claim or attempt so to define it. But obviously the most extreme Individualist must believe the same of his Individualism, and has as good a right to define it as if it were the whole doctrine, and the only true doctrine of society. The Individualist no more wishes to destroy society than the Socialist to suppress liberty: each agrees in desiring to be just both to society and to the individual. But notwithstanding this agreement they differ; and when we seek to distinguish them, and to define their systems, it is not with the mere general purpose or aim which they share in common, but with the specific characteristic in regard to which they differ, that we are concerned. Now wherein they differ is that the Socialist, while he may not mean to rob the

individual of any portion of his rightful liberty, insists on assigning to society powers incompatible with due individual liberty; and that the Individualist, while he may be anxious that society should be organised in the way most advantageous to all, deems individuals entitled to a freedom which would dissolve and destroy society. Neither Socialism nor Individualism can, with any propriety, be accepted as the true form of social organisation, or its doctrine identified with Sociology or the science of Society.

The mode in which I understand, and in which I mean to employ the term Socialism will not, I am aware, commend itself to those who call themselves Socialists. I do not ask or expect any Socialist who may read this and the following chapter to assent to the view or the definition of Socialism which I have here given. I ask and expect him merely to note in what sense I purpose using the word, namely, to denote only social doctrines, or proposals which I think I may safely undertake to prove require such a sacrifice of the individual to society as society is not entitled to exact. I claim the right to define Socialism frankly and avowedly from my own point of view—the non-socialistic.

But I fully admit that there is a duty corresponding to the right. It is the duty of not attempting to reason from my definition as if it were an absolute truth, or as if it were one to which Socialists assent. Such a definition is merely an affirmation, which the opponent of Socialism must undertake to show holds good of any system which he condemns as Socialism, and which an advocate of Socialism must undertake to show does not hold good of the system which he himself recommends.

Any one not a Socialist must, as I have said, define Socialism in a way which will imply that it necessarily involves injustice to individuals. The Socialist will be apt to say that in doing so one starts with the assumption that Socialism is false and wrong, in order, by means of the assumption, to condemn it as such. And the charge will be justified if one really judges of the character of any so-called socialistic system by his definition of Socialism. But this is what no reasonable and fair-minded man will do. Such a man will examine any system on its own merits, and decide by an unbiassed examination of it, as it is in itself, whether or not it does justice to individuals; and all that he will do with his definition will be to determine whether, when compared with it, the system

in question is to be called socialistic or not. There is nothing unfair or unreasonable in this. It is not judging of Socialism by an unfavourable definition of it; but only deciding, after an investigation which may be, and should be, uninfluenced by the definition, whether the definition is applicable or not.

What has been said as to the nature of Socialism may, however, indicate what ought to be the answer to a question which has been much debated, namely—Is it a merely temporary phase of historical development, or its inevitable issue? Is it a troublesome dream which must soon pass away or a fatal disease the germs of which the social constitution bears in it from the first and under which it must at last succumb? Is it the glorious goal to which humanity is gradually moving? On the view of its nature here adopted it is not exactly any of these things. It is neither merely accidental nor purely essential. It arises from principles inherent in the life and necessary to the welfare of society; but it does not spring from them inevitably, nor is it the one-sided exaggeration of them. Inasmuch, however, as truth underlies and originates it, and the exaggeration of that truth is always easy, and sometimes most difficult to avoid, without being strictly necessary it is extremely natural; and society can never be sure that it will ever on earth get free from it, while it may be certain that it will have to pass through crises and conjectures in which it will find Socialism a very grave matter to deal with. Society has always the Scylla and the Charybdis of Socialism and Individualism on its right hand and on its left, and it is never without danger from the one or the other. It is sometimes, of course, in much more danger from the one than from the other.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

It may not be without use to lay before the reader a few more definitions of Socialism. It is very desirable that he should realise how vague and ambiguous the term is, and how indispensable it is to ascertain on all occasions what those who use it mean by it.

When Proudhon, on examination before a magistrate after the days of June in 1848, was asked, What is Socialism? he replied, "Every aspiration towards the amelioration of society." "In that case," said the magistrate, "we are all Socialists." "That is precisely what I think," said Proudhon. It is to be regretted that he was not further asked, What, then, was the use of the definition?

Mr. Kaufman's definition reminds us of Proudhon's. After making

the entirely erroneous statement that "the very name" of Socialism means nothing else but "the betterment of society," he tells us that he himself includes under it "Communism, Collectivism, and every systematic effort under whatever name, to improve society according to some theory more or less explicitly defined." See "Subjects of the Day," No. 2, p. 1.

Littré, in a discussion on Socialism contained in his "Paroles de Philosophie Positive," somewhat similarly says, "Socialism is a tendency to modify the present state, under the impulse of an idea of economic amelioration, and by the discussion and intervention of the labouring classes," p. 394. He had already, in another discussion to be found in the same volume, given a far more extraordinary definition: "Socialism is a word felicitously devised (heureusement trouvé) to designate a whole body of sentiments, without implying any doctrine," p. 376.

I have not been able to find that Karl Marx has given any formal definition of Socialism. Mr. Holyoake states that he defines the "Socialistic ideal as nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into powers of thought," and remarks that "it would require an insurrection to get the idea into the heads of any considerable number of persons" ("Subjects of the Day," No. 2, p. 96). This is a very curious mistake. The words of Marx are: "With me *the ideal* is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind and translated into forms of thought." See preface to 2nd ed. of "Capital."

Bebel's definition is very pretentious and unreasonable: "Socialism is science applied with clear consciousness and full knowledge to every sphere of human activity." ("Die Frau," p. 376, 13th ed., 1892).

According to Adolf Held, "We can only call Socialism every tendency which demands any kind of subordination of the individual will to the community." ("Sozialismus, Sozialdemokratie, und Sozialpolitik," p. 29). Were this so, all but thorough Anarchists—Anarchists more thorough than any who have yet appeared—would be Socialists.

Dr. Barry, in his admirable "Lectures on Christianity and Socialism," while professedly admitting Held's definition to be satisfactory, gives as its equivalent what is really a much better one: "Socialism must, I take it, properly mean the emphasising and cultivating to a predominant power all the socialising forces—all the forces, that is, which represent man's social nature and assert the sovereignty of human society; just as Individualism is the similar emphasis and cultivation of the energy, the freedom, the rights of each man as individual" (p. 22). What, however, do these words precisely imply? If a theory of society does justice alike to the claims of the individual and of the community, or if a man sacrifices neither the individualising energies of his nature to its socialising forces, nor the latter to the former, but

duly cultivates both, there is no more reason, even according to the definitions given, for describing that man or that theory as socialistic than as individualistic, or as individualistic than as socialistic; and if you either describe them as both, or apply the terms to them indiscriminately, the words Socialism and Individualism cease to have any distinctive meaning. It is only when in theory or in life the emphasising of the social forces is carried to excess relatively to the individual energies, or *vice versa*, that either Socialism or Individualism emerges. But if so, Dr. Barry should define them just as I do, and recognise as of the very essence of both a departure from truth, a disregard of order and proportion.

Bishop Westcott, in a paper read at the Church Congress, Hull, Oct. 1st, 1890,* treated of Socialism in a way which justly attracted much attention. He identified Socialism with an ideal of life very elevated and true, and recommended that ideal in words of great power and beauty. I can cordially admire his noble pleading for a grand ideal. I am only unable to perceive that the term Socialism should be identified with that ideal. He says: "The term Socialism has been discredited by its connection with the many extravagant and revolutionary schemes, but it is a term which needs to be claimed for nobler uses. It has no necessary affinity with any forms of violence, or confiscation, or class selfishness, or financial arrangement. I shall therefore venture to employ it apart from its historical associations as describing a theory of life, and not only a theory of economics. In this sense Socialism is the opposite of Individualism, and it is by contrast with Individualism that the true character of Socialism can best be discerned. Individualism and Socialism correspond with opposite views of humanity. Individualism regards humanity as made up of disconnected or warring atoms; Socialism regards it as an organic whole, a vital unity formed by the combination of contributory members mutually inter-dependent. It follows that Socialism differs from Individualism both in method and in aim. The method of Socialism is co-operation, the method of Individualism is competition. The one regards man as working with man for a common end, the other regards man as working against man for private gain. The aim of Socialism is the fulfilment of service, the aim of Individualism is the attainment of some personal advantage, riches, or place, or fame. Socialism seeks such an organisation of life as shall secure for every one the most complete development of his powers. Individualism seeks primarily the satisfaction of the particular wants of each one in the hope that the pursuit of private interest will in the end secure public welfare."

Now, it seems to me that to dissociate the term Socialism from

[* Afterwards published in volume form, and entitled "The Incarnation and the Common Life."]

the forms in which Socialism has manifested itself in history, and to claim it for nobler uses than to express what is distinctive of them, is too generous. What we really need the term for is to designate a species of actual schemes; and to define it aright we must understand by it what is characteristic of all the schemes of that species. If nothing but good is admitted into the definition of the term, while the chief or only historical schemes which have an unquestioned right to the name are essentially evil, these schemes must derive from the name and its definition a credit and advantage to which they are not entitled. And if we are thus generous to Socialism we must be less than just to Individualism. Conceiving of it as the opposite of a system wholly good, we must regard it as a system wholly evil. An Individualism which views individuals as entirely unconnected and independent, which excludes co-operation, which deems the good of one as important as the good of many or all, is one which I cannot find to have existed. A Socialism which really regards humanity as an organic whole will also be difficult to discover. In its two great forms of Communism and Collectivism, Socialism is of all economic and political systems the one which most manifestly treats humanity as merely a mass or sum of individuals. The "society" to which it sacrifices individuals is just the majority of individuals. What it aims at is not the realisation of that true ideal of society which Bishop Westcott calls Socialism; it is not the attainment of the highest good of the whole and of every one in relation to the whole, but the attainment of the equal good of all, however much sacrifice of the exceptional and higher good of any may be required for that purpose. Socialism as a historical reality demands the equality of individuals in regard to means, opportunities, labour, and enjoyment. It directly appeals to the egoism and selfishness of the great majority of individuals. In the words of Mr. Bosanquet, "the basis of Socialism is as yet individualistic, the State being regarded, not as a society organic to good life, but as a machine subservient to the individual's needs *qua* individual." But, it may be said, does that not of itself justify the employment of the term to signify the true theory of society? It seems to me that it does not, and for two reasons: first, because it is not in itself desirable to designate the true theory of society an *ism*; and secondly, because those who maintain an erroneous theory of society are in actual possession of the name Socialists, and will not forego their right to retain it. Therefore, I think, we ought to restrict the term Socialism as much as we can to their creed. That the term is already far too widely and vaguely used needs no other proof than the number of men recognised as eminently wise who have been befooled by it to such an extent as to tell us that "we are all Socialists now."

The following definitions may be added:—"We call Socialism every doctrine which affirms that it is the office of the State to correct the

inequality of wealth which exists among men, and to re-establish by law equilibrium, by taking from those who have too much in order to give to those who have not enough, and that in a permanent manner, and not in such and such a particular case, a famine, for instance, or a public catastrophe, etc." (P. Janet, "Les Origines du Socialisme Contemporain," p. 67).—"In the first place, every Socialistic doctrine aims at introducing greater equality into social conditions; and secondly, it tries to realise these reforms by the action of the law or the State" (E. Laveleye, "Socialism of To-day," p. xv.).—"The word Socialism has but one signification: it denotes a doctrine which demands the suppression of the proletariat and the complete remission of wealth and power into the hands of the community (*collectivité*)." (T. De Wyzewa, "Le Mouvement Socialiste," p. 111.)—"Socialism is the economic philosophy of the suffering classes" (H. v. Scheel in "Schönbergs Handb. der pol. Oekonomie," Bd. i. 107.

[The impossibility of arriving at a clear definition of Socialism has been demonstrated by the futility of the various attempts made by numerous writers during the last few years. There is no agreement at all upon the subject. And it seems unlikely that any satisfactory definition will ever be arrived at. One of the most recent of the French writers on Socialism, M. Emile Faguet ("Le Socialisme en 1907"), has remarked that the term has become so vague and ambiguous that the definitions blend into one another like the shadings on a pigeon's neck. Another Frenchman, M. Leroy-Beaulieu, has stated that in addition to collectivism and true Socialism, there are now all kinds of "little Socialisms" in existence. "Each is greater, more soothing, more innocent than the other. There is the literary Socialism which flourishes in the hothouse of the smaller reviews of all complexions. There is the drawing-room or boudoir Socialism which amuses the ladies and frightens the children. There is Church Socialism, which comes to us with the Bible in its hand; and then there is the most widely spread and the most dangerous, perhaps, of all—the unconscious bourgeois Socialism, that of M. Jourdain, who preaches Socialism as formerly he talked prose, without knowing it."

The Author, in the first edition, criticised the definition of Mr. Kirkup, and pointed out how it was misleading and futile. In the new edition of his "Inquiry into Socialism," Mr. Kirkup has amended his previous definition, and now states that it is "a theory of social organisation, based on a new scheme of economic organisation" (page 119). Again, at page 117 of the same work, it is stated that "Socialism is a new principle of social organisation, based on a new form of industrial organisation. While most naturally associating itself with the new democracy and with an unselfish and humanitarian view of life, its essence is an *economic change*. Everything else is accidental, and in the view of Socialism non-essential. Questions connected with it as to

religion, ethics, politics, and as to the method of realising the theory may be and are of supreme importance ; but they are not Socialism."

It is interesting to compare the above statements with the recent pronouncement of Mr. Belfort Bax, the author of " Essays in Socialism, New and Old." In an Introductory Essay upon " Socialism : What it is, and what it is not," in order to remove misconceptions, he has made a vigorous attack upon those Socialists who evade or deny the challenge of their opponents as to their views upon matters other than the mere economic side of Socialism. " It is no use pretending," he says, " that while the economic structure of society is undergoing a fundamental revolution, other aspects of social life are to remain unscathed." He then proceeds :

" As to the question of sexual ethics. To the anthropologist and the students of the history of institutions, it is well known that forms of marriage and the family are intimately connected with the prevailing modes of property-holding. Under primitive communistic conditions various forms of the family prevailed which appear grossly immoral to the man who has grown up among modern individualist conditions. Hence arises the tendency in the present day of many convinced Socialists to shirk this question. They are, in their own minds, well persuaded that in a society such as Socialism implies, based on the communal production of wealth for social use and enjoyment, and hence where private property-holding has either ceased to be altogether, or at least has lost its importance—while they are, I say, quite aware that in such a society the principle of rigid monogamy enforced by law and public opinion, as at present, must break down before a freer conception of human relationships, yet they are extremely chary of admitting this in so many words. The current point of view of marriage, as a legally enforced bond and not a free relationship depending for its continuance on the will of the parties concerned, has acquired an absolute character with many persons who otherwise consider themselves emancipated, and hence there is a tendency either to deny the obvious implications of Socialism in this respect, or at least to fence with the question in a disingenuous manner." (Page 10.)

" The saying of Tridon, subsequently repeated by Bebel and others, to the effect that Socialism stands for a system of life and thought expressing itself in economics as Communism, in politics as Republicanism, and in religion as Atheism, embodies in a few words a large measure of truth. It may be convenient for Socialists, with a view to election expediency, to seek to confine the definition of Socialism to the economic issue abstracted from all the other issues of life and conduct. But the attempt to limit the term Socialism within the four walls of an economic definition is, in the long run, futile. Such a limitation is justified neither by historic usage nor, as above pointed out by the implications involved, in the economic change itself." (Page 11.)]

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF SOCIALISM

IF we desire to form an intelligent estimate of Socialism we should not fail to take due account of its history. Here I can only make a few seemingly indispensable remarks on that history.*

We have of late years heard much about Primitive Socialism. I object to the designation whenever it is used to imply that Socialism was the primitive condition of man. We do not know what the primitive condition of man was. Recent science and research have enabled us to see much farther back into the past than our forefathers could, but they have not yet reached results which entitle us either to affirm or deny that history began with Socialism.

Two views of Primitive Socialism are prevalent, and they are essentially different, delineating two distinct social states, one of which only can have been primitive, while both might be secondary, the one as a stage of degradation and the other as a stage of improvement. According to McLennan, Lubbock, and a host of other scientists, humanity was cradled in a coarse and brutal Communism. In their view, the earliest human societies knew neither a separate family life nor private property, being ignorant of any other laws than those of inclination and force. If this representation of man's first estate is correct we have only to congratulate ourselves that Primitive Socialism lies so far behind us, for it was not only man's earliest but his lowest and least human condition.

What is most generally meant by Primitive Socialism, however, is a much higher state, one comparatively moral and civilised.

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* Of histories of Socialism, Malon's "Histoire du Socialisme," a five-volumed work, is the fullest of information. In English, Rae's "Contemporary Socialism," Laveleye's "Socialism of To-day" (translated), Graham's "Socialism New and Old," and Kirkup's "History of Socialism" (third edition, revised and enlarged) are all valuable. Rudolph Meyer's "Emancipationskampf des Vierten Standes," 2 vols., is a laborious compilation of facts, and rich in documentary sources. Reybaud, Stein, Thonissen, Franck, Janet, Jäger, Adler, and others have done good work as historians of the socialistic movement. [A work from America is that of Morris Hillquit's "History of Socialism in the United States." This work, however, is severely criticised by W. H. Mallock in "A Critical Examination of Socialism" (1908).]

Greek and Roman poets sang of a golden age, when poverty and avarice were unknown, when there was no violence or fraud, and when all things were in abundance and in common. It is now claimed that modern historical investigation has discovered this golden age of ancient tradition, and that it is the true Primitive Socialism. Maurer, Maine, and many others have exhibited a vast amount of evidence, tending to prove that in the history of every country inhabited by any division of the Aryan race, and of not a few countries lying beyond the Aryan area, there was a time when the soil was distributed among groups of self-styled kinsmen, and when private property in land was scarcely known or was non-existent. A very attractive and popular view of the evidence for this conclusion has been given by M. Laveleye in his well-known work on "Primitive Property." In a general way this historical theory seems legitimately and satisfactorily established. But closer study is revealing that it has been presented too absolutely, and accepted without due criticism and limitation. Much which Laveleye calls *collective property* might more properly be called *collective tenancy;* and much which he calls primitive is probably not very old, and owed its existence largely to the fact that in turbulent times kings and chiefs could have got nothing out of isolated individuals; that only communities could cultivate land and pay taxes or yield services. There is no evidence that the land of the world was ever distributed among peaceful agricultural communities, entirely independent of lords and masters, within or without the community. On the other hand, the theory which represented private property in land to have been always and everywhere recognised and in force is now entirely discredited. Property in movables naturally preceded property in land; and the collective tenure of land generally preceded, perhaps, its individual tenure.

The stage of society in which land was occupied by communities, not individuals, was one in which men scarcely existed as individuals. The law and the religion which corresponded to it knew next to nothing of individuals; they were concerned with families and groups, in which no one felt with any distinctness that he had rights and duties simply as a man. When the claims of private judgment and of independent action were thus not so much denied and rejected as undiscovered and unimagined, what is called

"Primitive Socialism" may have been not only the natural and appropriate form of organisation of human societies, but the only one which they could assume. It is simply just to look back to it with due recognition of its merits; it must be foolish to dream of recalling or restoring it. In every progressive society it has been long outgrown. Where it still lingers it must disappear as freedom and energy increase. The natural childhood of nations as of individuals lies behind them and can never be recalled; the only childhood which the future can have in store for them is an unnatural childhood, that second childhood of decadence which is the sure forerunner of dissolution. When men have once awakened to a sense of their rights and duties as individuals, they can never again be content to think and act merely as members of a community. When the persons who compose society have each become conscious of a properly personal life and destiny, the unconscious kind of Socialism is henceforth impossible. The Socialism which alone seriously concerns us is of a very different character. It is a conscious Socialism, which knows itself and knows its enemy, which is the asserter of one class of claims and rights and the denier of another, which is the vigilant, active combatant, sometimes defeated, sometimes victorious, but never entirely suppressed, and never completely successful, of individuality and Individualism.*

In the nations of antiquity the individual was sacrificed to the State; but State absolutism, although clearly related to, is not to be identified with Socialism. The sacrifices which it demands may be political, not social; sacrifices to the governing power, not to the common interest. But what makes the history of nations like Greece and Rome of vast practical importance to a

* Roscher has shown (see his "Political Economy," book i., ch. v., sec. 78) that the idea of a community of goods, and schemes of a socialistic character have found favour especially in times when the following conditions have met:—(A) A well-defined confrontation of rich and poor, without any gradual and continuous passing of one class into another; (B) a high degree of the division of labour, by which, on the one hand, the mutual dependence of men grows ever greater, but by which, at the same time, the eye of the uncultivated man becomes less and less able to perceive the connection existing between merit and reward, or service and remuneration; (C) a violent shaking or perplexing of public opinion as regards the sense of right, by revolutions, particularly when they follow rapidly on one another and take opposite directions; (D) a democratic constitution of society, and the pretensions and feelings which it implies or generates; and (E) a general decay of religion and morals, and the spread of atheistic and materialistic beliefs.

student of Socialism is not so much any socialistic legislation to which these nations had recourse, or any socialistic theories to be found in some of their writers, as the examples which they have left us of cultured and powerful peoples ruined by failure to solve aright "the social question." The direct and immediate cause of the ruin of the Greek cities was neither the falsity of their religion nor the prevalence of slavery. The poor had political rights and political power, and they used them against the rich to obtain equality of wealth, sometimes imposing all the taxes upon them, sometimes confiscating their goods, sometimes condemning them to death or to exile, sometimes abolishing debts, sometimes equally dividing property. The rich resisted by all means in their power, by violence and fraud, conspiracy and treason. Each Greek city thus included, as it were, two hostile peoples, and civil wars were incessant, the object in every war being, as Polybius says, "to displace fortunes."* This ruined the Greek cities. Fifty years' agitation of the social question in the same manner would be found sufficient to ruin the strongest nations of modern Europe, notwithstanding their freedom from slavery and their profession of Christianity. Rome suffered and died from the same malady as Greece. Before the close of the Republic she had twice experienced a social revolution of the most sanguinary nature. She sought a refuge and remedy in the Empire, and at the expense of industry she fed and pampered an idle population. This solution secured rest for a time, but naturally ended in utter exhaustion and ruin.

The series of socialistic ideals or Utopias which have appeared in the world can be traced back to that of Phaleas of Chalcedon, about six centuries before Christ. Attempts to realise socialistic aspirations and claims have been made in many lands and ages, and in many forms and ways. Socialism is, therefore, no new thing. It has, however, entered on a new period of its history, and one which may be very prolonged and very momentous.

The socialistic theories which appeared in France even before the Revolution* were merely antecedents or preludes of the Socialism which at present prevails. Saint-Simon, who died in 1825, and Fourier, who died in 1837, were its true founders. Both of these extraordinary men left behind them disciples strongly convinced

* The theories referred to are those of Meslier, Morelly, Mably, Rousseau, and Babeuf.

that the reorganisation of society on new principles, by the establishment of new arrangements and institutions, and with a steady view to the amelioration of the class the most numerous and poor, was the most important and urgent of all problems. Louis Blanc convinced a multitude of his countrymen that the national organisation of labour was one of the chief duties of a Government. Proudhon, although a capricious and unequal thinker on economic subjects, has, perhaps, not been surpassed in critical keenness and argumentative ingenuity by any later Socialist. These and other French writers made Socialism in its new phase known to all Europe, but for a considerable time it remained almost confined to France. It is no longer so. France is now far from being the country most threatened by Socialism. Agrarian Socialism has little chance of success in France, owing to the relatively large number of its land-owners. Anti-capitalistic Socialism has no attraction for the *bourgeoisie* and can only move the masses in the manufacturing towns in France, and these are comparatively few in number, Socialism has, however, numerous adherents, sincere and effective advocates, and skilful literary representatives in France. French Socialism was no more slain on the barricades of 1871 than on those of 1848.*

Every country of Europe has now been more or less invaded by Socialism; and, of course, all these countries supply the United States of America with advocates of it.

In Spain and Italy it has taken a strong hold of the peasantry, who are in many districts grievously oppressed by excessive rent and taxation, and the result has been seen in various local insurrections. In Switzerland it has been extensively advocated by political refugees of various nationalities, but with little effect on the native inhabitants. In Belgium, which has a dense agricultural and manufacturing population, and where labour is very poorly remunerated, socialistic doctrines and schemes are probably more prevalent than in any other country.

Russia has given birth to a very strange system, which one always finds classed as Socialism, and which does not in general protest against being so regarded—the system called Anarchism or Nihilism.

* I have had occasion to treat at considerable length of Saint-Simon, Fourier, Louis Blanc, Proudhon, Auguste Comte, and other French Socialists, in my "Historical Philosophy in France and French Belgium and Switzerland."

It is, however, in reality, rather the extreme and extravagance of Individualism than a form of Socialism; and it is only just not to hold Socialism responsible either for its principles or its practices. It is an expression of the intense hatred of authority which unlimited despotism has engendered in deeply impressionable minds. It will hear of no authority in heaven or earth, of no subordination of man to man, or of man to any recognised moral or spiritual law. It says: Use all your strength and energy to level down the whole edifice of society which has been built up by the labour of ages; sweep away all extant institutions so as to produce "perfect amorphism," for if any of them are spared they will become the germs out of which the old social iniquities will spring up again; break up the nation and the family, and get rid of the bondage which they involve; destroy all States and Churches, with all their regulations and offices, all their obligations and sanctions; work towards confusion and chaos, in the faith that out of them will emerge a future in which all will breathe with absolute freedom; yet take no anxious thought as to the organisation of the future, for all such thought is evil, as it hinders destruction pure and simple, and impedes the progress of the revolution. Such was the creed of Bakunin, the apostle of Nihilism, a creed which he was able to spread not only over Russia, but throughout southern and western Europe, and for which many men and women have shown themselves willing to die and ready to murder.

It may, perhaps, seem to be merely the uttermost extreme of Individualism, and to have nothing socialistic in it. But extremes meet. When liberty degenerates into licence, that licence is found to be slavery. So when individuality generates anarchy, what it first and most assuredly destroys is its own self. The primary function of government is to coerce and suppress crime. Abolish government and crime will govern; the murderer and the thief will take the place of the magistrate and the policeman; every individuality will count only as a force, not as a being entitled to rights. Even the Nihilist cannot quite fail to see this; cannot altogether refuse to recognise that, except as a stage of transition, a society without government would be in a more deplorable state than if under the harshest despotism. Hence he lives in hope that out of the anarchy which he will produce organised societies will spontaneously emerge, in the form of small agricultural

communities, each of which will be self-governing and self-sufficing, contentedly cultivating its bit of land, and fairly sharing the produce among its members.

But he fails to give reasons for his hope. He does not show that societies ever have been, or are ever likely to be, organised *spontaneously* or otherwise than through the exercise of authority and the discipline of law. He does not explain how, were society overthrown and reduced to chaos, the result of the interaction of conflicting individual forces would be the springing up over all the earth of peaceful self-governing communities. He does not prove, and cannot prove, that if Europe were to become somewhat like what Russia would be if it had only its *mirs*, and if the Czar, the Germans and the Jews, the nobility and the clergy, the soldiers and the police, the fortresses and the prisons were swept away, its condition would be preferable to what it is at present. He does not indicate how he purposes to prevent the social world of his hope and admiration from again lapsing and passing through all those phases of civilisation which he detests; how he would arrest the growth of the individuality, that is to say, of the independence of character, the originality of mind, the personal energy, and the special acquirements and special skill, which would gradually but surely destroy it, just as they have destroyed what was like it in the past, just as they are now destroying the Russian *mir*.

The ideal of the Nihilist seems to be a very poor one in itself; and yet there appears to be no way of realising it except by Nihilists annihilating all who do not agree with them. Any scheme which can only be realised by men wading through the blood of their fellow-men should need no discussion.

I have said thus much about Nihilism, because it is generally regarded as Socialism; but I shall say no more about it in these pages. And for two reasons: first, it is, on the whole, not Socialism; and secondly, it is more of a disease than an error, and should be treated rather by moral remedies than by arguments. Its educated advocates are men and women who have been maddened by the sight of the effects of despotic and selfish government; and its ignorant believers are largely composed of those whom hunger, bad usage, and despair have rendered incapable of weighing reasons. It cannot be satisfactorily dealt with by logic, and still less by steel and shot; but only by better social arrangements, juster laws,

a sounder education, a purer and more energetic morality, a truer and more beneficent religion.*

Socialism has nowhere made more remarkable progress than in Germany. Previous to 1840 it had scarcely any existence in that country. The organisation of the German social democratic party took shape under the hands of Marx and Engels in 1847. The political agitations of 1848 were, on the whole, favourable to it. The conflict of labour and capital, which was at its keenest about 1860, was still more so, and is what chiefly explains the extraordinary success of the socialistic campaign so brilliantly conducted by Lassalle from 1863 to 1865. The Socialism of Germany has had more skilful leaders and a better organisation than Socialism elsewhere. At present it is a power which cannot be despised. Bebel has declared that every third man over twenty-five is a Social Democrat. Socialism is also indebted to German thinkers—Rodbertus, Winkelblech, Marx, Lassalle, Schäffle,† and others—for its elaboration into a form which allows it to put forth with plausibility the claim to have become scientific, and which really

* The theory of Anarchism is advocated with an eloquence worthy of a better cause in the following pamphlets, all procurable in an English form: M. Bakunin's "God and the State;" Elisée Reclus' "Evolution and Revolution;" and P. Krapotkin's "Law and Authority," "Expropriation," "Place of Anarchism in Socialistic Evolution," "War," "Appeal to the Young," and "Anarchism, its Philosophy and Ideal." I may quote the words with which Prince Krapotkin closes his "Law and Authority," inasmuch as they convey the general practical outcome of Anarchism:—"In the next revolution we hope that this cry will go forth: 'Burn the guillotines; demolish the prisons; drive away the judges, policemen, and informers—the impurest race upon the face of the earth; treat as a brother the man who has been led by passion to do ill to his fellow; above all, take from the ignoble products of middle class idleness the possibility of displaying their vices in attractive colours; and be sure that but few crimes will mar our society.' The main supports of crime are idleness, law, and authority; laws about property, laws about government, laws about penalties and misdemeanours; and authority, which takes upon itself to manufacture these laws and to apply them. No more laws! No more judges! Liberty, equality, and practical human sympathy are the only effectual barriers we can oppose to the anti-social instincts of certain amongst us." The most instructive work as to Anarchism and Socialism in Russia is Alphons Thun's "Geschichte der Revolutionären Bewegungen in Russland," the most complete work, so far as it goes, but ending with 1883. [Stepniak's "Underground Russia," and "Russia under the Tzars" should also be consulted. On Anarchism in general, see Kirkup's "History of Socialism," ch. x., Latouche's "Anarchy: Its Methods and Exponents," and Ellis Barker's "British Socialism," ch. xxx., with the authorities there quoted.]

[† It is to be recollected that Schäffle, who was a great authority among the Socialists, changed his views very considerably, and came to the conclusion that Democratic Collectivism was an impossibility.]

entitles it to expect that it will no longer be judged of by the schemes propounded at the earlier stages of its history.

There is prevalent, however, a very exaggerated conception of the success of German Socialism. It is by many supposed to have effected a revolution in the thinking of German economists, and to have converted most of them to its creed. It is very generally believed that the German professors of Political Economy have gone largely over to the socialist camp, and that what are called "Socialists of the Chair," or "Professorial Socialists," are true Socialists. This is a mistaken view. Socialism, in the proper sense of the term, has gained scarcely any proselytes among the professors of political economy in Germany.

The doctrines of free trade, of unlimited competition, of the non-intervention of the State, were, it must be remembered, never so popular among German as among English political economists; and during the last fifty years by far the largest school of political economy in Germany, the historical school, has been bearing a continuous protest against what is called Smithianism and Manchesterdom, and English political economy, as insular and narrow, too negative, too abstract and deductive, and blindly hopeful of national salvation from leaving every man to look after himself. German political economists, in passing from that to their present so-called socialistic position, have moved neither so rapidly nor so far as many of our Liberals who have passed into Radicals, and from being advocates of freedom and non-interference have become enthusiasts for fair rents, State-aid, and State-intervention.

The so-called Professorial Socialists of Germany have not got farther than our own governmental politicians. There is a large section of them whose alleged Socialism is simply the protectionism of paternal government, the protectionism of Prince Bismarck, but which that astute statesman naturally preferred to call his Socialism when he appealed to socialistic working-men. There is another large section of them whose so-called Socialism consists in adopting a programme of political reforms similar to that which Mr. Chamberlain propounded in this country in 1885. It may be questioned, however, if there is one true Socialist among them. They are simply State-interventionists of either a Conservative or a Radical type. In calling themselves, or allowing themselves to be called Socialists, they are sailing under false colours. Their

views as to property, labour, capital, profit, interest, etc., are essentially different from those of real Socialists.*

It is only in recent years that Socialism has made any considerable progress in Britain. The socialistic doctrine of Owen was very vague and nebulous. The "Christian Socialism" of Maurice and Kingsley, Ludlow, Hughes, and Neale, was thoroughly Christian, but not at all socialistic. The oldest socialistic association at present existing in England is the Social Democratic Federation, which was founded in 1881, but which did not put forth its socialistic programme until 1883. Its offshoot, the Socialistic League, was formed in 1885†. The Fabian Society and the Guild of St. Matthew are smaller socialistic bodies. There are numerous branch associations throughout the land. The Independent Labour Party was formed in 1892. The names of Hyndman, Champion, Blatchford, Quelch, Keir Hardie, Belfort, Bax, Bruce Glasier, MacDonald, Snowden, George Bernard Shaw, and the Rev. Stewart Headlam, are widely known as those of leaders of the various sections of English Socialists.‡ There are, so far as I am aware, no reliable statistics as to the number of Socialists in Britain.§ In the years of commercial and industrial depression through which the country passed just prior to 1894, when multitudes were thrown out of

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* The history of Socialism in Germany is treated of in the works mentioned in the note on p. 23. It is right, however, to mention in addition as exceptionally thorough and valuable studies, W. H. Dawson's "German Socialism and Ferdinand Lassalle," and "Bismarck and State Socialism." The best general view of the German schools of political economy is still, so far as I am aware, an Italian work published some thirty years ago, Professor Cusumano's "Scuole Economiche della Germania." The term "Kathedersocialist," Socialist of the Chair, or Professorial Socialist, was first employed as a nickname, and then accepted by those to whom it was applied, in the hope that they would thereby secure that Socialism would not be identified with the sort of doctrine taught by Marx, Lassalle, etc. M. Léon Say treats of State-Socialism in Germany as well as in England and Italy in his "Socialisme d'Etat," 1890. [The progress of Socialism in Germany is strikingly shown in the chapter of Kirkup's "History of Socialism," which deals with the recent progress of Socialism. At the general election in 1893 the Social Democrats polled 1,786,000 votes; in 1898 this number was increased to 2,100,000, and in 1903 to 3,010,000. In the last-named year the Socialists secured 81 seats in the Reichstag. There was an apparent set-back in 1907, when 27 seats were lost; but, the total vote showed an increase of at least 253,000. For a comparison between English and German Socialism, see Ellis Barker's "British Socialism."]

[† The League, as well as its organ "The Commonweal," only existed for a few years.]

[‡ See Supplementary Note.]

[§ See Supplementary Note.]

employment and brought to the verge of starvation, the socialistic propaganda had a kind of success which filled the minds of many who favoured it with exaggerated hopes, and those of many who disliked it with equally exaggerated fears. They fancied that the working classes were about to be won over in a body to the new faith, and that the social revolution which had been predicted was at hand. They overlooked the fact that the movement advanced with exceptional rapidity only among the unemployed, and those most affected by the causes by which that class was so largely increased; and that Socialism must, from its very nature, be far more likely to spread among those who have nothing to lose than among those who have, and in bad times than in good. When honest, sober, industrious men cannot get work to do and bread to eat, it is not wonderful that they should turn Socialists; and, if they do so, sympathy is the chief feeling with which they must be regarded. Men who are not employed because of their lack of honesty and sobriety ought to be otherwise viewed and dealt with, but they are none the less likely to be easily persuaded to approve of Socialism either in the form of Communism or Collectivism.

There is no evidence that British working men have to any very great extent gone over to Socialism strictly so called. There is a species of Socialism, of the worst type, which is proving attractive to no inconsiderable class of the community, and this has increased rapidly during the last few years. Possibly it is but a passing phase. But our comparative immunity in the past is no guarantee that there will be immunity in the future. And certainly no country in the world would have so desperate a task devolved upon it as our own, were Socialism to become either the creed or the ideal of masses of our population.

No other country has the bulk of its land owned by so few persons. In no other country is industry so dependent on the enterprise of large capitalists. No other country has in anything like so small a space the same number of towns each with a population of over 100,000 inhabitants.

The more highly developed, the more elaborately organised national life becomes, the less fitted, the less capable does it become to pass through a social revolution. Let Britain become, like Athens, the scene of a struggle between the rich and the poor,

[* See Supplementary Note.]

the former striving to keep and the latter to seize the wealth of the nation; or let the poorer classes of Britain become like those of Rome, after they had gained their enfranchisement, weary of the production of wealth, and resolved on such a distribution of it as will give them maintenance and amusement without labour; and it will need no foreign enemy to lay this mighty empire prostrate. In such a case there could only be in store for us an alternation of revolutions, a restless tossing between anarchy and despotism. In such a state the barbarians would not require to come from afar for our overthrow; the barbarians would be here.

There is much to favour the spread of Socialism amongst us. Many rich persons make a deplorable use of their riches—a frivolous, selfish, wasteful, corrupting use of them. Masses of the people are in a state of misery and degradation disgraceful to the nation, and which, if unremedied, must be fruitful of mischief. Our population is so dense, and our industrial economy so elaborate, that a slight cause may easily produce great disaster and wide discontent. The pressure of competition is often very hard, and many human beings have to labour to an excess which may well explain the revolt of their hearts against the arrangements under which they suffer. The foundations of religious faith have been so sapped and shaken by various forces that there are thousands on thousands in the land devoid of the strength and steadfastness to be derived from trust in God and the hope of a world to come. In consequence of the wide prevalence of practical materialism, many have no clear recognition of moral law, of right as right, of the majesty of simple duty. The balance of political power is now unquestionably on the side of the majority; and although it is just that it should be so, it does not follow that the majority may not do unjustly, may not act quite as selfishly as the minority did when dominant; while it is evident that there will be more ready to seek to gain their favour by false and unmanly ways.

Yet there is nothing to warrant a pessimistic view of the course of coming events, or despair as to the future. The resources for good which providence has placed in the hands of the British people are immense, and, if faithfully used, they are amply adequate to avert every danger. Although the extremes of poverty and wealth in this country are at an enormous distance from each other, the whole interval is filled up by classes which pass into one another by

insensible gradations, and which collectively so outnumber either the very rich or the very poor that at present the chance of success of any socialistic revolution must be pronounced infinitesimally small. The workmen of Great Britain have never, like the citizens of Greece and Rome, sought to get free of work, but only to be better paid for their work. A feeling of the honourableness of labour is on the increase. Socialism itself is a testimony to the growth of the sense of brotherhood. Faith in God and faith in duty may have been here and there shaken, but they have not been uprooted, and are even widely and vigorously displaying their vitality. Individuality of character and the love of personal independence will not be easily vanquished in Britain. It has never been the character of the nation to adopt vague and revolutionary proposals without criticism of them and consideration of their cost. We may be less exposed to the dangers of Individualism and more to those of Socialism than we were forty years ago, but to be afraid of the speedy and decisive triumph of Socialism is to be foolishly alarmed.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

THE ADVANCE OF SOCIALISM IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

The rapid advance of Socialism during the last fifteen years has been one of the most startling factors in contemporary history. In its world growth it has been described as " a new historical fact." And although it was at one time supposed that Socialism was less likely to flourish on English soil than on that of any other country, the contrary appears to be the real state of the case. Both in literature and in active work the British Socialist is in no way behind his foreign brother.

The principal recognised organisations of the Socialistic movement in Great Britain are the Social Democratic Federation, the Fabian Society, and the Independent Labour Party.

The Social Democratic Federation—the S. D. F.—was founded March, 1881, though it did not adopt its present name until 1884. One of its most prominent members has been and is Mr. H. M. Hyndman. It has always professed an unshaken faith in the teachings of Marx. At the present time it has over 200 branches and affiliated societies, with a largely growing membership. Its principal organs are *Justice*, a weekly paper, and the *Social Democrat*, issued once a month. The offices of the Federation are at 21A Maiden Lane, Charing Cross, W.C.

The Fabian Society came into existence in 1884. Its work has been and is mainly educational, and it seeks to create an English school of Socialism by means of its lectures, its discussions, and its tracts.

It claims to have a membership of over 2,000, and among the best known names occur those of Mr. George Bernard Shaw, Mr. Sidney Webb, Sir Sidney Olivier, Mr. H. G. Wells, and the Rev. R. J. Campbell. It has no recognised organ in the press, but its tracts have created much interest and comment. The Fabians have resolutely refused to accept the Marxian teaching as being beyond criticism, being opposed in this respect to the Social Democratic Federation. The address of the Secretary is 3 Clement's Inn, Strand, W.C.

The third of the Socialistic organisations is that of the Independent Labour Party—generally known as the I. L. P.—which was founded by Mr. Keir Hardie, M.P., at Bradford, in 1892. Though the youngest of the three organisations, it is by far the largest, and the most important politically. It has always advocated Socialism, and has never wearied of making a bid for the support of the various trade organisations of the country. It has failed, as yet, with the Trades Unions and the National Union of Teachers, but it obtained a signal victory at the Labour Party Congress, held at Hull, in January, 1908. There are about 750 branches of the I. L. P. in different parts of the country, and their activity is shown by the fact that during 1907 meetings were held on an average of 2,000 a week. The recognised organ is the *Labour Leader*, a weekly publication. But the I. L. P. is also responsible for the publication of a large number of works dealing with social questions, and of translations from the writings of leading foreign Socialists. Among these should be noticed "Socialism and Positive Science," by Professor Enrico Ferri; "Socialism and Society," by J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P.; "Socialist Studies," by J. Jaurès; "White Capital and Coloured Labour," by Sir Sidney Olivier, C.M.G.; and "Collectivism and Industrial Evolution," by E. Vandervelde. Various other volumes are promised. The offices of the I. L. P. are 23 Bride Lane, Fleet Street, E.C.

But in spite of these organisations the most important Socialist force in England at the present time is the Labour Party to which reference has been already made, and which must be carefully distinguished from the Independent Labour Party. The members of the Labour Party are over 1,000,000 in number, and the result of their vote at Hull in January, 1908, cannot yet be estimated.

The Labour Party achieved a great success at the general election in 1906, and produced an enormous impression upon the public mind. It returned thirty-one members to the House of Commons, and of these twenty-three or twenty-four are pronounced Socialists. The impression then created was deepened by the spirited contests in the bye-elections of 1907, especially those of Jarrow, Colne Valley, and Kirkdale. There can be no doubt that these three elections have had more than anything else to do with the interest taken by the public generally in Socialism, and have gone far towards producing the

enormous correspondence and discussions which have taken place in the daily papers as well as in the various weekly periodicals and monthly magazines during 1907 and 1908.

Other Socialistic associations, but quite independent of any of the organisations named, are the Christian Social Union, 102 Adelaide Road, N.W.; Guild of St. Matthew, 376 Strand, W.C.; and the Socialist Party of Great Britain, 107 Charlotte Street, W. The aims and objects of each of these associations can be learned by applying to their respective headquarters. Another association, not yet fully organised, is the Church Socialist League, which was formed in the year 1906. The organising Secretary is the Rev. Conrad Noel, Coggeshall, Essex, and there is a semi-official organ of the League, *The Optimist*, published quarterly.

Unconnected with any organisation, but having considerable influence upon a certain section of the community, are the *Clarion* and the *New Age*, each a weekly newspaper. The *Clarion* claims to have a circulation greater than that of any other Socialistic newspaper. Both the *Clarion* Press and the *New Age* Press issue a large number of publications in favour of Socialism. The *Socialist Annual* and the *Independent Labour Party Year Book* are full of information as to the latest movements of the Socialists.

The necessity for combating Socialism has led to the formation of various societies, and these societies are actively engaged in counteracting the Socialistic forces. They are the Industrial Freedom League, 124 Palace Chambers, Westminster, S.W.; the Liberty and Property Defence League, 25 Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.; the British Constitution Association, 23 Charing Cross, S.W.; and the London Municipal Society, 11 Tothill Street, Westminster, S.W. The Secretary of each of these societies will give full information as to the objects of its members, and as to the policy which is advocated. The Liberty and Property Defence League has also drawn up a list of works which it recommends for the study of those who would combat Socialism. The majority of these works are referred to in various parts of the text of the present volume, and need no special mention here.

For a long period the main force of Socialism in the United Kingdom was in England, and especially London. Now, owing to the activity of the militant members, it has spread rapidly in the provinces, and has also extended to Scotland. There is a Socialist Labour Party at 63 Adelphi Street, Glasgow, and the headquarters of the Socialist Sunday Schools Union are at 366 New City Road, Glasgow. In Ireland Socialism has made little progress except in the north of that country. There are various obvious reasons which account for this fact.

CHAPTER III

COMMUNISM, COLLECTIVISM, AND STATE INTERVENTION

THE two chief forms of Socialism are Communism and Collectivism. Both are clearly included in Socialism, and they are easily distinguishable. It is unnecessary to say much regarding the first. The second is the only kind of Socialism which is very formidable, and, consequently, the only kind which urgently requires to be discussed.

Communism is related to Socialism as a species to its genus. All Communists are Socialists, but all Socialists are not Communists. Perhaps all Socialism tends to Communism. Socialism revolts against the inequalities of condition which result from the exercise of liberty. But why should it stop short, or where, in opposing them, can it stop short, of the complete equality of conditions in which Communism consists? Only when property is left undivided, only when it is held and enjoyed by the members of a society in common, is there equality of condition.

It is often said that Communism is impracticable. In reality it is the form of Socialism which is far the most easily and has been far the most frequently practised. Communistic societies have existed in nearly every land, and have appeared in almost all ages of the world. It would be easy to collect from the last two thousand years of history many hundreds, and, from the last century, many dozens, of examples of such societies. The family has from its very nature somewhat of a communistic character. The aggregation of families originated those so-called primitive communities still extant in various countries, which held land in common, and in which there very probably was at first proprietary equality among all the families of each group. But such natural or naturally evolved forms of society as families and village communities have never been found to be exclusively communistic, nor without considerable distinctions and inequalities of condition existing between their members. Many societies more properly designated communistic have had their origin and end in religion, as, for example, that of the early Christians in Apostolic times, those among the

Gnostic sects, the monastic brotherhoods of the Catholic Church, the pantheistic brotherhoods of mediæval heretics, etc., down to the associations of Shakers and Rappists in the United States. Religious Communism has in some cases flourished and conferred great services on humanity, owing to the religious abnegation and zeal which have originated and inspired it, but it has certainly cast no light on how the bulk of mankind may acquire a sufficiency of the means of material well-being.

It is, perhaps, only in the present century that communistic societies have been formed as solutions of the industrial and social problem. The great field for experiments of the kind has been the United States. These experiments have not been uninstructive or useless; and no reasonable person will regret that they have been made, or desire to see the liberty of repeating and varying them restricted. It may be unwise in a man to surrender his individual rights or personal property in order to become a member of a communistic society, but if he does so freely, and can quit the society should he get tired of it, he ought to be allowed to have his own way. The fullest freedom of combination, of co-operation, and of association cannot be justly withheld so long as the primary laws of morality are not violated.

Already, however, it is clear enough that no communistic experiments carried on in the backwoods of America will yield much light as to how the economic and social evils which endanger countries in advanced stages of development, are to be removed or remedied. A large number of experiments made have entirely failed, ending in a forsaken saw-pit and an empty larder. Others have had considerable success. In the United States there are at the present time between seventy and eighty communistic societies, a goodly proportion of which are not of recent origin, while a few of them are about a century old. It has been estimated that their collective or aggregate wealth if equally divided among their members would amount to about £800 for each, which far exceeds the average wealth of the population even of the richest countries. But the slightest investigation of the causes of the prosperity of the more flourishing of these societies shows that they are of a kind which must necessarily prevent Communism from being any generally applicable solution of the social problem.

Communistic associations have had advantages in America

which could not have been obtained in Europe. They have got land for little or nothing, and timber for the mere trouble of cutting it down. They have lived under the protection of a powerful government, and, through means of communication provided by a wealth not their own, within reach of large markets. They have, for the most part, had capital to start with, and been composed of select and energetic individuals.

But what is still more important to be remarked is that wherever communistic associations have not proved failures as industrial or economical experiments, their success has been dependent on two conditions—namely, a small membership and a strict discipline; the one of which proves that Communism cannot be applied to nations, and the other of which shows that it is not in harmony with the temper of a democratic age. It is only when a communistic society is small that each member can see it to be for his own advantage to labour diligently and energetically. The more the number of associates is increased the more is the interest of each to work for the increase of the collective wealth diminished, and the greater become the temptations of each to idleness. If a man is one of 400 persons engaged in any industrial undertaking, the whole produce or gain of which is to be equally divided among the co-operators, the inducement to exertion presented to his mind in the form of self-interest will probably be stronger than that which acts on the majority of men who work for wages. Not so, however, if he is one in 4,000 ; and if he is only one in 40,000, it will be hopelessly weak. But were nations like Britain, France, and Germany placed under a communistic system, each man would be only one in thirty, forty, or more millions of co-operators, all entitled to share alike. In this case the stimulus of self-interest to exertion would be practically nil ; and the temptations to indolence and unfaithfulness would be enormous.

The difficulty thus presented to the realisation of Communism is at once so formidable and so obvious, that a number of those who see in it the only just system of social organisation and the only true solution of the social problem have felt themselves compelled to propose that each of the nations of Europe should be dismembered into thousands of small, separate, independent communes. Such was the scheme of the leaders of the socialistic insurrectionists in Italy and Spain. Clearly, even if it were carried

into execution, although the individuals within each commune might be levelled into equality, the communes themselves could not fail to be unequal in their advantages, and thus occasions for lusts and envyings, wars and fightings among them would abound, while they would be at the mercy of any nation which had been wise enough to retain its unity. It would be a waste of time to refute so monstrous a proposal; yet the dismemberment of nations which it recommends is an indispensable condition to the general application of communistic principles.

Moreover, the societies which practise Communism must, in order to succeed, be characterised by submissiveness to law and authority. The love of their members for equality or for a common cause must be so strong that they will be content to renounce independence of judgment and action for them. The Icarian societies founded by Cabet signally failed because they consisted of men who imagined that communistic equality could be combined with democratic freedom. The societies of Shakers founded by Ann Lee have flourished because their members implicitly obey the rules dictated by those whom they suppose to be the channels of the *Christ-spirit.*

It is simply comical to hear Communism preached by revolutionists and anarchists. But they may learn not a little by attempting to practise what they preach. Let even fifty of them join together and endeavour to act on communistic principles, and they will soon discover that the new order of things which they have been recommending can no more be carried on without a great deal of government than could the old order of things which they denounce; that if government was needed to prevent people from attempting to retain more than they have honestly gained, still more will it be needed to make them submit to a system based on equal distribution, however unequal may be production—or, in other words, on the denial of the labourer's right to seek a remuneration proportioned to the value of his labour. Should they succeed in living and working together harmoniously and prosperously, without any servile surrender of their individual wills to a governing will or common law, the sight of so great a miracle will do far more to convert the world to their views than argumentation or eloquence, insurrection or martyrdom. The world has not hitherto beheld anything of the kind. Probably it never will.

To establish a democratic Communism is likely to prove as unmanageable a problem as to square the circle.

Communism, however, is now generally regarded as an effete and undeveloped form of Socialism. The kind of Socialism most in repute at present is one which cannot be carried into practice by the voluntary action of individuals, nor illustrated by experiments on a small scale. It is the Socialism which can only be realised through the State, and which must have a whole nation as a subject on which to operate. It is the government of all by all and for all, with private property largely or wholly abolished, landowners got rid of, capital rendered collective, industrial armies formed under the control of the State on co-operative principles, and work assigned to every individual and its value determined for him.

Speaking of this form of Socialism, Schäffle says:

"Critically, dogmatically, and practically, the cardinal thesis stands out—collective instead of private ownership of all instruments of production (land, factories, machines, tools, etc.); 'organisation of labour by society,' instead of the distracting competition of private capitalists; that is to say, corporate organisation and management of the process of production in the place of private businesses; public organisation of the labour of all on the basis of collective ownership of all the working materials of social labour; and finally, distribution of the collective output of all kinds of manufacture in proportion to the value and amount of the work done by each worker. The producers would still be, individually, no more than workmen, as there would no longer be any private property in the instruments of production, and all would, in fact, be working with the instruments of production belonging to all—*i.e.*, *collective* capital. But they would not be working as private manufacturers and their workmen, but would all be on an equal footing as professional workers, directly organised, and paid their salary, by society as a whole. Consequently, there would no longer exist in future the present fundamental division of private income into *profits* (or in some cases the creditor's share, by way of interest, in the profit of the debtor) and *wages*, but all incomes would equally represent a share in the national produce, allotted directly by the community in proportion to the work done—that is, exclusive returns to labour. Those who yielded services of general utility as judges, administrative officials, teachers, artists, scientific investigators, instead of producing material commodities—*i.e.*, all not immediately productive workers, all not employed in the social circulation of material, would receive a share in the commodities produced by the

national labour, proportioned to the time spent by them in work useful to the community." *

The Socialism thus described has come to be commonly designated Collectivism, and the name is convenient and appropriate. It is the only kind of Socialism greatly in repute at present, or really formidable; and, consequently, it is the form of it which especially requires to be examined. It is the Socialism which I shall henceforth have chiefly in view.

Collectivism will appear to most men obviously to involve an excessive intervention of the State—one which deprives individuals of their fundamental rights and liberties. It is Society organised as the State intervening in all the industrial and economic arrangements of life, possessing almost everything, and so controlling and directing its members that private and personal enterprises and interests are absorbed in those which are public and collective. Most people will ask for no proof that such Socialism as this would be incompatible with the freedom of individuals, and would be a degrading and ruinous species of social despotism. They will consider this self-evident, and deem that those who do not perceive that Collectivism will be utterly subversive of liberty, and that its establishment would be the enthronement of a fearful tyranny, must be blind to the distinction between liberty and tyranny.

Now, that Collectivism must inevitably and to a most pernicious extent sacrifice the rights and liberties of individuals to the will and authority of society, or the State, I fully believe; but I admit that I must prove this, and not assume it. The whole question as to the truth or falsity of Collectivism turns on whether it necessarily does so or not, and, therefore, nothing should be assumed on the point. I shall endeavour to meet the obligation of proving Collectivism to be a system which would be destructive of liberty by discussing the chief positions maintained, and the principal proposals advocated, by Collectivists. But in what remains of this chapter I must be content to indicate the ground from which I shall thus examine the claims of Collectivism, and of Socialism generally.

Individualism is an excess as well as Socialism, and one excess while it so far tends to counteract, also so far tends to evoke another. When Hobbes, for example, inculcated a theory of selfishness, a system of ethics which made self-love the universal principle of

* "The Quintessence of Socialism" (Engl. tr.), pp. 7-9.

conduct, he was speedily followed by Cumberland, who maintained the negative in terms of the directest antithesis, and taught that the only principle of right conduct is benevolence. The most ready and forcible mode of denying an obnoxious theory is by positively affirming and defending its contrary. It is, therefore, only what was to have been expected that the prevalence of Socialism should drive many of those who see its dangers into Individualism; that a consequence of one class of social theorists assigning to the State far more power than it ought to possess should be the ascribing to it by another class of far less power than it is desirable to allow to it; that a belief in State omnipotence should generate a belief in administrative nihilism. In this we are willing to recognise a natural necessity, or even a providential arrangement. Humanity very probably requires to learn impartiality through experience of the contradictions and exaggerations of many parties and partisans. Yet none the less is every man bound to try to be as impartial, as free from excess on any side, from all narrowness, exaggeration, and partisanship as he can. And, therefore, while desiring fully to acknowledge alike the truths in Socialism itself, and the importance of the services rendered by those who oppose the errors of Socialism from individualistic standpoints, I must, for my own part, endeavour to deal with Socialism without making use of the principles or maxims of what I regard as Individualism.

The Individualist assumes that the limits of State action should be unvarying, and may consequently be indicated in some simple rigid formula. It would plainly be very convenient for indolent politicians if the assumption was true, but it does not seem to be so. The sphere of State power has not been the same in any two nations, nor in any one nation at any two stages of its development. And there is no good reason for thinking it should have been otherwise. Nay, a man who does not see that the measure of State control and direction to be exercised ought to have varied according to the characteristics, antecedents, circumstances, education, enterprise, dangers, and tasks of those who were to be controlled and directed, must be a man to whom history is a sealed book, and who is consequently incapable of forming a rational theory of the sphere and functions of the State. The slightest survey of history should suffice to convince us that an enormous amount of mischief has been caused by over-legislation, and that human progress has

largely consisted in widening the range of individual liberty and narrowing that of public interference; but it must make equally manifest that nations have generally owed their very existence to having been subjected in their youth to a system of discipline and government which they justly rejected in their maturity as despotic. We may well be suspicious, therefore, of formulæ which profess to convey to us in a few words the absolute and unvarying truth concerning what is essentially relative and ever varying. When examined they will always be found to be very inadequate, and often, notwithstanding a specious appearance of clearness, obscure or even unintelligible.

J. S. Mill's Essay on "Liberty" is a noble and admirable production, but there is very little light or help indeed to be got from what its author considered its "one simple principle, entitled to govern absolutely the dealing of society with the individual in the way of compulsion and control"—namely, the principle "that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number is self-protection; that the sole purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others."

The proof of this principle will be sought for in the Essay in vain. The distinction between effecting good and preventing harm cannot be consistently and thoroughly carried through in such a connection. Soldiers are no more maintained to repel foreign enemies, and policemen to apprehend thieves and murderers, merely in order to prevent harm, without any view to doing good to the community, than physicians are called in to free individuals from sickness, but not to help them to get well. In all the functions of government the production of good and the prevention of evil are inseparable, and they are equally legitimate aims of action.

Further, the so-called "principle," while seemingly definite, is in reality utterly vague. All vices inevitably injure not only those who indulge in them, but cause suffering to those who do not. There are few, if any, actions which are purely self-regarding. It is just because of the amount of harm which drunkenness produces that a class of social reformers desire to put an end to all liberty to make use of strong drinks. Mr. Mill of course opposed their proposals, but it was certainly not by adhering to his "one

simple principle." That principle can be no effective barrier to encroachments on individual liberty, to over-legislation, to social despotism.

Speaking generally Mr. Spencer is regarded by Individualists as a safer and more consistent guide than was Mr. Mill. And his "Man *versus* The State" is undoubtedly a most vigorous and opportune assault on excessive State intervention. While I regard it as one-sided and exaggerated in some of its charges, and seriously at fault on certain points, I admire it in the main as not only a valuable book but a brave and excellent action.

I cannot perceive, however, that in it or in any other of his works Mr. Spencer has established any self-consistent or practical system of Individualism. Mr. Auberon Herbert and the party of Individual Liberty believe that they find at least the firm foundation-stone of such a system in his formula, "the Liberty of each, limited alone by the like Liberty of all." But is it so? To me these words seem to be vague and ambiguous. They tell neither what is the liberty of "each" nor of "all," and, therefore, nothing as to how, or how far, the liberty of each is to be limited by that of all.

"Like liberty!" Like to what? Like to a liberty which has no other limit than the limit of others? Then the formula means that each individual may do to any other what he pleases, provided all other individuals may do to him what they please. But that is simply saying that there should be no society, no government, no law whatever; that man is made for anarchy and lawlessness; that his ideal condition is what Hobbes supposed to be his primitive condition—"bellum omnium contra omnes."

If the formula does not mean this it must mean, what it unfortunately, however, does not state, that if men are to live as social beings the liberty of each man, and of all men, should be limited by a like law, the common law. This is quite true. If I become a member of any society I must agree to obey the laws of the society. I cannot be a citizen of any country unless I consent to have my liberty limited by its common and constitutional law. I may seek the improvement of the law in a constitutional way, but if I go further I renounce my citizenship and must become an alien or an enemy. In every society the liberty of each and of all its members is limited by the common and constitutional law of the society, and must be so limited, otherwise the society will dissolve. It

is social law which must limit and render alike the liberty of each and of all the members of the society; not the limitation of the liberty of each by the like liberty of all which determines what is the proper constitution of society.

Liberty is limited by law, justly limited only when limited by just law; law and justice are not constituted by liberty, nor by mere equality of liberty. In fact the phrase, "the Liberty of each limited alone by the like Liberty of all," is destitute of meaning apart from knowledge of a law which limits liberty—apart from knowledge of the very law which it is supposed to reveal.

The theory that the State has for its sole aim to protect life, liberty, and property, or, in other words, to repel invasion and punish crime, is definite and intelligible. But it is also arbitrary and inadequate. Those who object to pay taxes for anything except defence from fraud and violence might, with consistency, object to taxation even for that. There may be men who seek from the State no protection, and who are prepared to endure wrong without appealing to it for reparation. There may be many who consider it a greater hardship to be compelled to contribute to the maintenance of an army in a distant dependency than to the support of a school in their own neighbourhood. To me it seems that no member of a nation has reason to complain of being required, so long as he profits by the various real and precious advantages of good government, to bear his share of its necessary expenses; that, on the contrary, to refuse to do so would be selfish, unreasonable, and unjust. The State, in my view, has a variety of functions through the right exercise of which all its members are greatly benefited, and for the exercise of which, therefore, they may be fairly required collectively to provide. The political Individualism which denies to the State the right to intervene in any measure or in any circumstances for the positive development of industry, intelligence, science, morality, art, is as erroneous, and, could it be consistently and completely carried out, which happily it cannot, would be almost as pernicious as fully developed Socialism.

Does it follow that one who thus discards individualistic theories of the limits of the State must needs accept some socialistic theory thereof, or can at least have no firm standing ground from which to oppose Socialism, or definite and sound criteria by which to test it? By no means. It is true that he has not a theory which he can sum

up in a sentence like either the Socialist or the Individualist. It is not so easy to formulate a theory which will apply to all the relevant facts with all their complications and variations, as to formulate one which is a mere ideal of the reason or imagination, and calmly or boldly indifferent to all troublesome and antagonistic realities. But though neither an Individualist nor a Socialist, a man need not be—and if he undertakes to discuss political subjects ought not to be—without some theory as to the proper limits of State action; and however conscious he may be that his theory can be only an approximation to the full truth, he may be confident of having in it means sufficient to enable him to test such a theory as Socialism. I should gladly, if time and space enough were at my command, discuss the question of the limits of State intervention, as there are few questions more worthy of careful consideration. I can only here and now, however, indicate in a few sentences that, apart from such a discussion, we may without arrogance undertake to form and express a judgment on socialistic conclusions and proposals.

First, then, there are *simple, definite, and well-ascertained moral laws* which ought to condition and regulate the actions both of States and of individuals. We may fairly demand that all theories alike of State intervention and of personal conduct shall recognise these laws. It is obvious how this applies to our subject. Certain unfriendly critics of the doctrine of *laisser faire* have understood it to mean that the State should not restrict commercial competition within even the limits of veracity and honesty. This was certainly not what Adam Smith nor any eminent economist belonging to his school meant by it. Adam Smith formulated the doctrine of *laisser faire*, or natural liberty, thus: "Every man, *as long as he does not violate the laws of justice*, is left perfectly free to pursue his own interests his own way, and to bring both his industry and capital into competition with those of any other man or orders of men."* There may have been some theorists—it is difficult to disprove a negative—who omitted from this teaching of the doctrine

* "Wealth of Nations," Bk. IV. ch. ix. p. 286 (Nicholson's ed.). In the "Introductory Essay" prefixed to his edition, Prof. Nicholson has made some remarks on Adam Smith which I cannot deny myself the pleasure of reproducing: "The author of the 'Theory of Moral Sentiments,' the keystone of which is sympathy, the man who at his death left a much smaller fortune than was anticipated, owing to his constant expenditure in deeds

the condition expressed by Adam Smith in the words italicised; there can be no doubt that a great many people have not given due heed to it in their practice; but, of course, the doctrine when so misrepresented and mutilated is not merely a false but a disgraceful doctrine. The Individualism which should teach the doctrine in such a form must be at once condemned. Socialism is to be tested by a like criterion. If any of its proposals directly or indirectly imply a violation of the laws of justice, it is so far a theory of State action to be repudiated.

Secondly, there are *certain fundamental human liberties* essential to the true nature and dignity of man, but which have been only slowly and painfully realised through ages of struggle. Bodily freedom, enfranchisement of women, industrial freedom, intellectual, moral, and religious freedom, political freedom, with freedom of speech and association, are such liberties. They are all amply justified both by a true philosophy of man's nature and relationships and a correct interpretation of his history. Any

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of unostentatious charity, the man who was especially distinguished amongst his contemporaries by his geniality and kindness, is popularly supposed to be the father of the dismal dogmas which amongst the vulgar (if the term may be still used in its older signification) pass current for Political Economy. The most cursory perusal of the 'Wealth of Nations,' however, will convince the reader that the spirit in which it is written is essentially human, and the most careful scrutiny will bring to light no passage in which the doctrine of 'selfishness' is inculcated. The 'economic man,' the supposed incarnation of selfishness, is no creation of Adam Smith; all the characters of the 'Wealth of Nations' are real—Englishmen, Dutchmen, Chinese. The 'economic man' of ultra-Ricardians is no more to be found in Adam Smith than is the 'socialistic man,' the incarnation of unselfishness, the man who loves all men more than himself on the arithmetical ground that all men are more than one. Adam Smith was unacquainted with any society composed mainly of either species. Of the 'socialistic man' he writes: 'I have never known much good done by those who affected to trade for the public good. It is an affectation indeed not very common among merchants, and very few words need be employed in dissuading them from it.' But the most severe passages in Smith's work are those in which he condemns the various 'mean and malignant expedients' of the mercantile system, and satirises the 'economic' merchants who, actuated only by the 'passionate confidence of interested falsehood,' in order to promote 'the little interest of one little order of men in one country hurt the interest of all other orders of men in that country, and of all other men in all other countries.' Adam Smith treats of actual societies, and considers the normal conduct of average individuals" (pp. 13, 14). The present writer, in the article "Buckle," published many years ago in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," indicated how little foundation there was for the opinion that in the "Theory of Moral Sentiments" man was represented as purely benevolent, and in the "Wealth of Nations" as purely selfish. Dr. Richard Zeyss also, in his "Adam Smith under der Eigennutz," 1889, has dealt with the same question more fully and quite conclusively.

system which implies that they are to be contracted or suppressed may be reasonably suspected to be erroneous, likely to be fatal to human progress and welfare if successful, but really doomed to failure. The whole history of the world has shown that, although the arrest and repression of the movement towards liberty have been attempted by force, fraud, and seduction of all kinds and in all ways, it has been without avail. I see no liberty yet gained by humanity which ought to be sacrificed or even lessened.

Thirdly, there are *economic laws*—natural laws of national wealth—which cannot be neglected or violated with impunity. Systems of social construction not conformed to them ought not to be adopted. There is a science which professes to exhibit these laws—political economy. Not many years ago its teaching was generally received with a too unquestioning trust. At present it is widely viewed with unwarranted suspicion, or foolishly assumed that it may be safely disregarded. The laws of political economy have not, indeed, either the perfect exactitude or the entire certainty of mathematical or dynamical laws. The natural sciences have reached few truths which answer to a strict definition of law; the social sciences have probably reached still fewer. But, short of absolutely exact and indubitably demonstrated laws, there are many more or less satisfactorily ascertained relations and regularities of causation, of dependence and sequence, which may fairly be viewed as laws, and which it may be very desirable to know. Political economists have brought to light many such truths. They have also laboriously collected and carefully classified masses of economic data, subtly analysed all important economic ideas, and exhaustively discussed a multitude of economic questions and theories. They have thus made large additions to the knowledge and thought indispensable to enlightened statesmanship.

I am not, and never was, an adherent of what was not long ago considered economic orthodoxy in England. Some forty years ago it was my professional duty to teach political economy, and from the first I endeavoured to show that the distinctive tenets of the dominant Ricardian creed in regard to value, rent, and wages were erroneous, and reached by a one-sided method which was largely biased by personal and national prejudice. The fact that these tenets are the very pillars on which Marx and Lassalle reared their whole economic structure certainly shows that economic

error can be powerful for evil; but it also shows the necessity for the refutation of such error, and that economic truth must be fruitful of good. The attempts which have been made during the last thirty years to subvert and discredit political economy have only increasingly convinced me of the soundness and value of its teaching as a whole and in essentials. Those who set it at naught in their social schemes will, I am persuaded, lead grievously astray those who take them as guides. Economical expediency or the reverse to a nation in its organic entirety is an indication of the legitimacy or illegitimacy of State intervention; and those who endeavour to ascertain by carefully conducted studies this limit between wise and foolish State intervention must be more likely to discover it than other men.

Fourthly, *what the State can and cannot do, may do well or must do ill,* is determinable by adequate reflection, enlightened by history and experience. The State can only act through an official machinery, and the working and effects of such machinery can be approximately calculated. It is only owing to our own ignorance or insufficient consideration if we do not perceive that many things which the State might, perhaps, legitimately do, if it could do them greatly better than private persons and voluntary associations, ought not to be undertaken by it because it is sure to do them worse. The Radicals of forty years ago were disinclined to allow the State to do anything which individuals could possibly do, however well the State, and however badly individuals, might be able to do it. The Socialists of to-day, on the other hand, are disposed to entrust to the State whatever it is capable of, even when individuals, separately or in combination, are more competent to do it. The Radical owing to his bias erred, but not more than the Socialist errs from the contrary bias.

The implied formulæ of the Radical and of the Socialist are equally crude and insufficient, although they originate in contrary motives; in exaggerated fear in the one case, and in excessive faith in the other. We ought obviously to keep free alike from all unwarranted suspicion of the State and from all blind idolatry of it. And if we do so, we shall certainly not judge of the propriety or impropriety of its intervention in any instance by either of the formulæ mentioned; or by any doctrinarian formula whatever such as both of them manifestly are; but we shall, in each particul

instance where intervention is suggested, carefully and impartially examine what, with the resources and appliances at its disposal, and in all the circumstances of the case, the effects of the intervention will necessarily or naturally be, and decide accordingly.

Unfortunately at the present time many of our political advisers are so enamoured of State intervention that what weighs most with them in favour of any form of its intervention is just what ought to have no weight in their judgment at all, namely, the mere fact that it is its intervention. Curiously enough, by the irony of fate, and perhaps their own want of humour, a considerable section of these advisers in this country call themselves "Fabians," from, I suppose, the famous old Roman general whose grand characteristic was prudence, and whose great merit was the clearness with which he saw that in the circumstances in which Rome was placed, safety and victory were only to be secured to her through a masterly inactivity, the observance of *laisser faire*. Fabius had "Fabians" of the modern kind in his camp; they were those who chafed under his command, and desired a bolder policy, such as he saw would lead to disaster.

Fifthly, whenever the intervention of the State tends to diminish self-help and individual energy, or to encourage classes or portions of the community to expect the State to do for them with public money what they can do for themselves with their own resources, it is thereby sufficiently indicated to be excessive and unwise. "If," said Lord Goschen, in one of his Edinburgh addresses, "we have learned anything from history, we are able to affirm that the confidence of the individual in himself and the respect of the State for natural liberty are the necessary conditions of the power of States, of the prosperity of societies, and of the greatness of peoples." "If," says Prof. Pulszky, "the State undertakes a task too arduous, and taxes the strength of its citizens to a greater extent than is necessary for the attainment of its proper aim, that portion of activity, which it superfluously exacts from its members, yields a much scantier return than if it had been left to subserve individual initiative, which can, after all, alone supply the motive cause of all social progress. It follows, accordingly, that if the State assumes the management of affairs which the citizens would have been able to carry on without its aid, the effect will be that the citizens lose both the disposition and the readiness for independent initiative,

that their individuality becomes stunted, and that thus, as the factors of progress dwindle away, the State itself becomes enfeebled and decays."*

The demand that the State should refrain from such intervention as tends to lessen the reliance of its members on their own powers, and to prevent the development of these powers by free and energetic exercise, by no means assumes, as the Radicals of a former generation were wont to assume, that there is a necessary and irreconcilable antagonism between the State and its members, so that whatever it gains they lose, and its strength is their weakness. It may be, and ought to be, rested on the very different ground that the State cannot be truly strong if the individuals and societies which compose it are lacking in personal and moral energy; cannot, as an organic whole, be vigorous and healthy if its constituent cells and component members have their strength absorbed, and scope for their appropriate activity denied them, by the foolish and tyrannical meddlesomeness of its head, its Government.

When we speak of the intervention of the State what we really and necessarily mean is the intervention of the Government through which alone the State acts. And every Government is under temptation to interfere both too little and too much; both to neglect its duties and to occupy itself with what it ought to let alone. There are, indeed, fanatical admirers of Democracy who seem to believe that in democratic countries the danger of Governments interfering too much needs not to be taken into account; that when the people at large elect their governors Governments will cease to be encroaching and unjust. The optimism of such persons is of the shallowest conceivable kind. There is nothing either in the nature or in the history of Democracy to warrant it. Democracies are always ruled by parties, their governors are always the leaders of parties; and parties and their leaders are naturally ambitious, selfish, and grasping, or, in other words, prone to aggrandise themselves at the expense of their adversaries and of the commonwealth. Democratic Governments are, consequently, in no wise exempt from temptations to the intervention which unduly restricts the liberties, undermines the independence, and saps the vigour of individuals and classes, of institutions, associations, and communities.

* "The Theory of Law and Civil Society," p. 307.

Finally, in judging of proposals for the extension of governmental action, account must be taken of *the state of public opinion* in relation to them. What a Government may be justified in undertaking or enacting with the universal approval of its subjects, it may be very wrong for it to undertake or enact against the convictions and consciences of even a minority of them. The common division of the functions of the State into *necessary and facultative* is of significance in this connection. The former are those which all admit rightfully to belong to the State. That the Government of a nation should repel invasion, maintain internal order, prevent injustice, and punish crime, is universally acknowledged. No man's reason or conscience is offended by its doing these things. It is recognised by every one that only by the full discharge of these duties does it justify its existence, and that, whatever else it may undertake, it ought not to undertake what is incompatible with their efficient performance. As to its facultative functions it is otherwise. When a Government takes upon itself obligations which are not naturally imperative but optional, opinions will differ as to the wisdom and propriety of its procedure, and the difference may be such as of itself to suffice to determine whether the procedure is wise and proper or the reverse. It is not enough that a Government should be itself convinced of the justice and expediency of its intervention ; it is also important that the justice and expediency thereof should be perceived by the nation at large. Governments must beware of coming rashly into conflict with the reasons and consciences of even small minorities of honest men. Otherwise they will have either to make exceptional laws for these men or to treat them as criminals ; and the adoption of either alternative must, it is obvious, very seriously discredit and weaken their authority. Socialists demand that the State shall do many things to the doing of which there is this insuperable objection—that, even were these things right and reasonable in themselves, there are so many persons who firmly believe them to be unjust and tyrannical, that they can only be carried into effect by a vast and incalculable amount of persecution. But persecution does not lose its wickedness when it ceases to refer to religion.

Any very simple or rigid solution of the problem as to the limits of State intervention must, I believe, be an erroneous one. The limits in question are relative and varying. To trace them aright

through the changes and complications of social and civil life will require all the science and insight of the genuine statesman. The truth in regard to them cannot be reached by mere abstraction or speculation, and cannot be expressed in a general proposition.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

I. COMMUNISM.—J. W. Noyes, the founder of the Oneida Community, and author of a "History of American Socialisms," considers Communism to be the practical recognition of unity of life. "Our view," he says, "is, that *unity of life* is the basis of Communism. Property belongs to life, and so far as you and I have consciously one life, we must hold our goods in common. If there be no such things as unity of life between a plurality of persons, then there is no basis for Communism. The Communism which we find in families is certainly based on the assumption, right or wrong, that there is actual unity of life between husband and wife, and between parents and children. The common law of England, and of most other countries, recognises only a unit in the male and female head of each family. The Bible declares man and wife to be 'one flesh.' Sexual intercourse is generally supposed to be a symbol of more complete unity in the interior life; and children are supposed to be branches of the one life of their parents. This theory is evidently the basis of family Communism. So also the basis of Bible Communism is the theory that in Christ believers become spiritually one; and the law 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' is founded on the assumption that 'thy neighbour' is, or should be, a part of 'thyself.' Practically, Communism is a thing of degrees. With a small amount of vital unity, Communism is possible only in the limited sphere of familism. With more unity, public institutions of harmony and benevolence make their appearance. With another degree of unity, Communism of external property becomes possible, as among the Shakers. With still higher degrees, Communism may be introduced into the sexual and propagative relations." *

The view set forth in these words is worthy of being noted, inasmuch as it is undoubtedly one on which various communistic societies have been actually based. It explains why such societies have been characterised by their deplorable combination of spiritualistic folly with carnal immorality.

Noyes is by no means singular in representing the family as a stage of Communism. In reality, however, the family is an exemplification of the true social community, which is incompatible with Communism the best type, in its normal state, of the organic social unity whic Communism would destroy. In the family individualities are n

* "History of American Socialisms," pp. 197-8.

suppressed, but supplemented; personal relations are not confused, but harmonised; authority and subordination are maintained; differences of duty are recognised; and even more rights are acquired than are sacrificed. Communism has always, and very naturally, shown itself hostile to the family. In what Noyes represents as the highest degree of Communism the family is abolished.

Similarly, the third degree of his Communism annuls the second. The doing away with private property must overthrow the "public institutions of harmony and benevolence" supported by it. His last two degrees are, in fact, alone properly communistic; and they are so just because they contradict and violate the truths in the two first.

In Professor Wagner's opinion, "the only scientific acceptation of the term Communism is 'Gemeinwirthschaft,' common economy," or, let us say, quite aware of the looseness of the rendering, common management. "Every other 'sense' of the word," he adds, is "nonsense." Then he proceeds to illustrate his definition by informing us that the State in its administration of the public finances is an example of Communism; and that the post office, telegraph and railway systems, etc., when under State direction, are equally instances of it.*

Such a view is confused and misleading. Communists have always meant by Communism not merely common management in general, any sort of common management of property with a view to production and advantage, but definitely the management of the property of a community by the community itself, and with all its members, on terms of equality. They have never conceived of it as management by departmental officials under the control of a king or parliament. They have never imagined anything so absurd as that they could vindicate their claim to be called Communists by forming themselves into little States and handing their property over to be managed by a ruling individual or class. Communism, properly so-called—"common management" in the communistic sense—is almost as inconsistent with State management as with private management.

Having fallen into the error indicated, it was natural that Professor Wagner should regard Communism, in the ordinary and proper acceptation of the term, as a phenomenon on which not a word need be spent ("über dem kein Wort zu verlieren ist"). But this is a great mistake. The history of Communism is rich in instruction, not only for students of human nature, but even of economics. It may be doubted if other Socialists have any economic doctrines which they have not derived in some measure from the Communists. All truly socialistic systems logically gravitate towards Communism. While communistic experiments have failed to attain their more ambitious aims, they have been fairly fruitful of lessons. They have even sufficiently shown

* "Lehrbuch der Politischen Oekonomie," p. 171.

that, under certain conditions, communistic societies can acquire a considerable amount of wealth.

The chief conditions are the two already specified (pp. 39-41), namely, a small membership and a strict discipline. But there are others—*e.g.*, religion, restriction of population, and capable leadership. Communistic societies have never long enjoyed much material success except when animated by some kind of religious zeal. In America only the religious communities—such as those of Beizel, Rapp, the Shakers, the Snowbergers, Zoar, Ebenezer, Mrs. Eddy, and Janson—have grown rich. Another feature distinctive of the communities which have materially prospered is that their members have been either celibates or "practical Malthusians." The family as it exists in ordinary Christian society is an effective barrier to the success of Communism, rendering impossible that separation from general society and those sacrifices which it demands. The influence of leadership on the prosperity of communistic bodies is easily traceable. The death of their founders has been in a large proportion of cases followed by the cessation or decline of their temporary success.

The prosperity of communistic societies has been almost exclusively of a material kind. They have given to the world no eminent men. They have done nothing for learning, science, or art. Their separation of themselves from the society around them has rendered them incapable of benefiting it. The opposition between their interests and those of healthy family life is equivalent to their being essentially anti-social. "The communistic spirit, as distinguished from the socialistic, is indifferent to the good of the family, or hostile to it, and makes use of the power of society for its own protection, without doing anything for society in return. If a whole nation were divided up into communities, the national strength and the family tie both would be weakened. A State so constituted would resemble, in important respects, one consisting of small brotherhoods, or *gentes*, or septs, but with much less of the family tie than is found in the latter when general society is as yet undeveloped."*

Communism is, of course, not to be confounded with schemes for the equal division of property. It aims at the abolition of private property, not at the multiplication of private properties. It can thus repel the objection that it implies the necessity for a constantly recurring division of properties in order to keep them equal. It cannot escape, however, the necessity of implying a continuous division of the common wealth and labour of each communistic society among its individual members according to some conception of equality or equity. "Common can only mean what is common to individuals, and, therefore, not what is indivisible among them, but what they are individually entitled

* President Woolsey in Herzog-Schaff's "Encyclopædia," vol. iii., p. 22

share. Common property is simply property to which all the individuals of a community have an equal or proportional right. It differs from individual property merely in that each individual interested in it is not free in dealing with it to act according to his own views of what is for his advantage, but is dependent on the wishes and conduct of all the other individuals composing the community. The production of wealth cannot be otherwise "common" than as the production of a number of combined and co-operating individuals, each of whom must bear his own burden of toil. The product of common capital and labour can only be consumed or enjoyed by individuals. There can be, in fact, no production, possession, or enjoyment, which is not ultimately individual, even under the most communistic arrangements. Hence, as the wealth of a communistic society continually varies in amount as a whole, it practically continually divides itself among the individual members of the society, and that in a way which may be as disastrous to them as would a continuous equalisation of properties to the individual citizens of a commonwealth.

Communism can only be consistent and complete when it affirms the equal right of all to the use of the means of production, the equal obligation of all to labour in industrial work, and the equal claim of all to share in every species of social enjoyment. It does not, of course, contemplate a general scramble for spades and ploughs, hats and coats, but it legitimates it when the supply of such articles is deficient. Thus Communism, while the extreme of Socialism, touches on Anarchism, the extreme of Individualism.

The Fourierist societies should not be described as communistic. Fourierism was a system of complex Associationism in essential respects antithetic to Communism, although marked by some of its features.*

Whether the fraternal love of the primitive Church of Jerusalem did or did not express itself in the entire renunciation of private property, a complete community of goods, is a question on which the most eminent exegetes of the Acts of the Apostles are far from agreed. A community of goods has seemed to some Christian teachers, brotherhoods, and sects, the social ideal of Christianity. The want or weakness of Christian love has seemed to them the chief or sole obstacle to its realisation. There are, however, two others, far from inconsiderable: common sense, discernment of the manifest evils which its general acceptance as a rule of life would infallibly inflict on society; and a sense of justice, a sense of the responsibilities and obligations which the renunciation of private property would leave men incapable of meeting. M. Joly, in his "Socialisme Chrétien," 1892, has learnedly

* The most instructive works on modern economic Communism are that Noyes, already mentioned, and William Alfred Hind's "American Communities: Brief Sketches of Economy, Zoar, Bethel, Aurora, Amana, Icaria, Oneida, Wallingford, and the Brotherhood of the New Life." Oneida, 1878.

and impartially shown how exaggerated is the view held by many Socialists as to the teaching of the founders, fathers, and doctors of the Christian Church regarding private property, wealth, and poverty, etc.

II. COLLECTIVISM.—It is permissible and convenient to treat of Collectivism as a kind of Socialism co-ordinate with Communism. It is not, however, essentially distinct from it. Karl Marx, its founder, was content to call it Communism. And, in fact, it may not unfairly be described as in one aspect a *universalised*, and in another aspect a *mitigated Communism*.

Collectivism is Communism pure and simple in so far as it declares unjust all private property in the means of production, distribution, and exchange; and it is this Communism universalised, inasmuch as it is not content to leave its realisation to the union in voluntarily constituted groups of those who believe in its justice and expediency, but seeks to "capture" Governments, and through them to impose itself legislatively on nations. It admits that it can only be definitely established in any single nation concurrently with its evolution in all other advanced nations. It claims to be the heir of all the ages, and the outcome of the whole development of civilisation; the stage into which capitalism is necessarily everywhere passing,—that in which, as Engels says, "the exploited and oppressed class will free itself from the exploiting and oppressing class, and at the same time free society as a whole from exploitation, oppression, and class conflicts for ever."

Collectivism is, on the other hand, mitigated Communism, inasmuch as it promises to allow of private property in objects destined merely for consumption. Whether it can consistently make this promise, or is likely to keep it, are questions which we shall not here discuss. It is sufficient to note that it makes the promise, and that it is, in consequence, so far differentiated from a strict or complete Communism.

The Belgian Socialist, Colins, began to advocate collectivist principles in a work published in 1835, and the French Socialist, Pecqueur, in a volume which appeared in 1836. It was not, however, until between twenty and thirty years later that these principles were so presented as to master the understandings and inflame the passions of a multitude of working men; and that Collectivism made itself felt as a mighty and portentous reality. It appeared in Germany under the name and form of *Sozial-demokratie* (Social Democracy); and was from the first militant and threatening. Karl Marx was its theorist and strategist Lassalle was its orator and agitator. Rodbertus had not the slightes direct influence upon it—merely an indirect through Marx and Lassall It has now spread over the civilised world; but the spirit of Marx inspires it, his schemes of organisation and of war are still acte by it, and his "Das Kapital" is still its "Bible."

At this point I wish to give all due prominence to the central

ruling idea of Social Democracy. This can best be done, I think, by quoting the words in which that idea has found expression in the most authoritative documents of Social Democracy, its chief manifestoes and programmes. A considerable subsidiary advantage will also thus be gained, as the reader will have brought under his observation the most important portions of a number of documents with which it is desirable that he should be to some extent acquainted.

The *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, drawn up by Marx and Engels in 1847, is the earliest and most celebrated of these documents—the first and most vigorous presentation of the general creed of the democratic Socialism of the present day. I quote from it these sentences :

"When, in the course of development, the distinctions of classes have vanished, and when all production is concentrated in the hands of associated individuals, public authority loses its political character. Political power in the proper sense is the organised power of one class for the suppression of another. When the Proletariat, in its struggle against the middle class, unites itself perforce so as to form a class, constitutes itself by way of revolution the ruling class, and as the ruling class forcibly abolishes the former conditions of production, it abolishes therewith at the same time the very foundations of the opposition between classes, does away with classes altogether, and by that very fact with its own domination as a class. The place of the former bourgeois society, with its classes and class contrasts, is taken by an association of workers, in which the free development of each is the condition of the free development of all."

Next may be adduced the Fundamental Pact or Statutes of the International Workmen's Association, drawn up by Marx in September, 1864 :

"Considering :—That the emancipation of the working classes must be carried out by the working classes themselves, and that the struggle for the emancipation of the working classes does not imply a struggle for class privileges and monopolies, but for equal rights and duties, and for the abolition of all class domination ;

"That the economic dependence of the working man on the monopolist of the means of production, the sources of life, forms the basis of servitude in every form, social misery, mental degradation, and political dependence ;

"That consequently the economic emancipation of the working classes is the great aim to which every political movement must be subordinated as a mere means to an end ;

"That all endeavours directed to this great aim have hitherto failed from want of union between the various departments of labour of each country and from the absence of a fraternal bond of union between the working classes of the various countries ;

"That the emancipation of labour is neither a local nor a national, but a social problem, which comprises all countries in which the modern state of society exists, and whose solution depends on the practical and theoretical co-operation of the most advanced countries ;

That the present re-awakening of the working classes of the industrial countries of Europe, while raising new hopes, contains a solemn warning against a return to old mistakes, and demands the close connection of the movements which are as yet separated ;

For these reasons the first International Congress of Workmen declares

that the International Workmen's Association and all societies and individuals connected with it acknowledge truth, justice, and morality as the basis of their behaviour among themselves and towards all their fellow-men without regard to colour, creed, or nationality. The Congress regards it as the duty of a man to demand the rights of a man and a citizen, not only for himself, but also for every one who does his duty. No rights without duties, no duties without rights."

The properly socialistic portion of the *Eisenach Programme* (August, 1869) runs as follows :

"The Social Democratic Workmen's Party strives for the establishment of a free State governed by the people.

"Every member of the Social Democratic Workmen's Party pledges himself to support with all his power the following principles :

"1. The present political and social conditions are extremely unjust, and must therefore be attacked with the greatest energy.

"2. The struggle for the emancipation of the working classes is not a struggle for class privileges and advantages, but for equal rights and equal duties, and for the abolition of all class domination.

"3. The economical dependence of the labourer on the capitalist forms the basis of servitude in every form, and consequently the Social Democratic Party aims at abolishing the present system of production (wage system), and at securing for every worker the full result of his labour by means of co-operative production.

"4. Political freedom is an indispensable condition for the economic emancipation of the working classes. The social question is therefore inseparable from the political ; its solution depends thereon, and is possible only in a democratic State.

"5. Considering that the political and economical emancipation of the working class is only possible if the latter carries on the struggle in concert and in unison, the Social Democratic Workmen's Party offers a united organisation which, however, makes it possible for each to make his influence felt for the good of the whole.

"6. Considering that the emancipation of labour is neither a local nor a national, but a social problem which comprises all countries in which the modern state of society exists, the Social Democratic Workmen's Party considers itself, as far as the laws of the society permit it, as a branch of the International Workmen's Association, and unites its endeavours therewith."

The corresponding portion of the *Gotha Programme* (May, 1875) reads as follows :

"Labour is the source of all wealth and of all civilisation, and since productive labour as a whole is possible only through society, the whole produce of labour belongs to society—that is, to all its members—it being the duty of all to work, and all having equal rights in proportion to their reasonable requirements. In the present state of society the means of production are the monopoly of the capitalist class ; the dependence of the working class resulting from this is the cause of misery and servitude in every form. The emancipation of labour requires the conversion of the means of production into the common property of society, and the social regulation of the labour of society, the product of labour being used for the common good and justly divided. The emancipation of labour must be the work of the working class in relation to which all other classes are only a reactionary mass.

"Starting with these principles, the Socialist Workmen's Party of Germa uses all legal means to attain a free State and a socialistic condition of soci

the destruction of the iron law of wages, the abolition of exploitation in every form, the removal of all social and political inequality. The Socialist Workmen's Party of Germany, though at present acting within national limits, is conscious of the international character of the workmen's movement, and is determined to fulfil every duty which it imposes on the workers, in order to realise the fraternity of all men.

"The Socialist Workmen's Party of Germany demands, for the purpose of preparing for the solution of the social question, the establishment of socialistic co-operative societies, supported by the State, under the democratic control of the working people. These co-operative societies must be instituted for industry and agriculture to such an extent as to cause the socialistic organisation of the labour of all to arise therefrom."

The *Erfurt Programme* (October, 1891) gives a fuller statement:

"The economic development of bourgeois society necessarily leads to the ruin of the industry on a small scale which is founded on the private property of the workman in his means of production. It separates the workman from the means of production, and transforms him into a proletarian possessing nothing, owing to the means of production becoming the property of a relatively limited number of capitalists and of large landed proprietors.

"In proportion as the means of production are monopolised, large agglomerated industries displace small scattered; the tool is developed into the machine; the productivity of human labour is enormously increased. But all the advantages of this transformation are monopolised by the capitalists and large landed proprietors. For the proletariat and the intermediate layers on the slope of ruin—small tradesmen, peasants, etc.—this evolution means a continuous augmentation of insecurity of existence, of misery, of oppression, of slavery, of humiliation, of exploitation.

"Always greater becomes the number of the proletarians, always larger the army of superfluous workmen, always harsher the antagonism between exploiters and exploited, always more exasperated the war of classes between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, which separates modern society into two hostile camps, and which is the common characteristic of all industrial countries.

"The abyss between those who possess and those who do not possess is still farther widened by the crises which arise from the very nature of the capitalist mode of production; they become always more extensive and disastrous, make general uncertainty the normal state of society, and prove that the productive forces of the society of to-day are too great, and that private property in the means of production is now incompatible with the orderly application of these forces and their full development.

"Private property in the means of labour, which was formerly property in the fruit of his labour to its producer, serves now to expropriate peasants, manual labourers, and small tradesmen, and to place those who do not labour—capitalists and large landowners—in possession of the product of the workers. Only the transformation of capitalist private property in the means of production—the soil, mines, raw materials, tools, machines, means of transport—into collective property, and the transformation of the production of commodities into production effected by and for society, can make our large manufacturing industry and proportionally increased power of collective labour, instead of sources of misery and oppression as regards the classes hitherto exploited, sources of the greatest happiness and of harmonious and universal improvement.

"This social transformation means the enfranchisement not only of the [l]abouring classes, but of the whole of the human species which suffers under [p]resent conditions. But this enfranchisement can only be the work of the [l]abouring class, because all the other classes, notwithstanding the conflicting [i]nterests which divide them, rest on private property in the means of

production, and have as their common aim the maintenance of the foundations of existing society.

"The battle of the working class against capitalist exploitation is necessarily a political battle. The labouring class cannot fight its economic battles and develop its economic organisation without political rights. It cannot bring about the transition of the means of production into collective property without having taken possession of political power.

"To give to this war of the working class unity and consciousness of the end aimed at, to show to workmen that this end is a necessity in the order of nature, such is the task of the Socialist Democratic Party.

"The interests of the working class are identical in all countries where the capitalist mode of production prevails. With the universal expansion of commerce, of production for the market of the world, the condition of the workmen of each country becomes always more dependent on the condition of the workmen in other countries. The enfranchisement of the working class is consequently a task in which the workmen of all civilised countries should equally take part. In this conviction the Socialist Democratic Party of Germany declares itself in unison with the workmen of all other countries who are true to their class.

"The Socialist Democratic Party of Germany fights, therefore, not for new class privileges, but to abolish the domination of classes and classes themselves, and to establish equal rights and equal duties for all, without distinction of sex or descent. Starting with these ideas, it combats in existing society not only the exploitation and oppression of those who work for wages, but every species of exploitation and oppression, whether it be directed against a class, a family, or a race."

I have not referred to those portions of the foregoing documents in which are formulated the demands of the Social Democracy for measures tending either to ameliorate or supplant the present *régime*. My last quotation gives an adequate conception of these demands, and indicates their place and purpose in the collectivist scheme of doctrine and policy. It is that part of the manifesto of English Socialists—the *Manifesto of the Joint Committee of Socialist Bodies** —which sums up the conclusions arrived at by the representatives of the Social Democratic Federation, the Fabian Society, and the Hammersmith Socialist Society, as supplying a basis for united socialistic action :

"It is opportune to remind the public once more of what Socialism means to those who are working for the transformation of our present unsocialist state into a collectivist republic, and who are entirely free from the illusion that the amelioration or 'moralisation' of the conditions of capitalist private property can do away with the necessity for abolishing it. Even those readjustments of industry and administration which are socialist in form will not be permanently useful unless the whole state is merged into an organised commonwealth. Municipalisation, for instance, can only be accepted as Socialism on the condition of its forming a part of national, and at last of international Socialism, in which the workers of all nations, while adopting within the borders of their own countries those methods which are rendered necessary by their historic development, can federate upon a common basis of the collective ownership of the great means and instruments of the creation and distribution of wealth, and thus break down national animosities by the solidarity of human interest throughout the civilised world.

* Published in pamphlet form in May 1893. But see the latest programme of the socialistic organisations set out in the Appendix.

" On this point all Socialists agree. Our aim, one and all, is to obtain for the whole community complete ownership and control of the means of transport, the means of manufacture, the mines, and the land. Thus we look to put an end for ever to the wage system, to sweep away all distinctions of class, and eventually to establish national and international Communism on a sound basis.

" To this end it is imperative on all members of the Socialist party to gather together their forces in order to formulate a general policy and force on its general acceptance.

" But here we must repudiate both the doctrines and tactics of Anarchism. As Socialists, we believe that those doctrines, and the tactics necessarily resulting from them, though advocated as revolutionary by men who are honest and single-minded, are really reactionary, both in theory and practice, and tend to check the advance of our cause. Indeed, so far from hampering the freedom of the individual, as Anarchists hold it will, Socialism will foster that full freedom which Anarchism would inevitably destroy.

" As to the means for the attainment of our end, in the first place, we Socialists look for our success to the increasing and energetic promulgation of our views amongst the whole people, and, next, to the capture and transformation of the great social machinery. In any case the people have increasingly at hand the power of dominating and controlling the whole political, and through the political, the social forces of the empire.

" The first step towards transformation and reorganisation must necessarily be in the direction of the limitation of class robbery, and the consequent raising of the standard of life for the individual. In this direction certain measures have been brought within the scope of practical politics ; and we name them as having been urged and supported originally and chiefly by Socialists, and advocated by them still, not, as above said, as solutions of social wrongs, but as tending to lessen the evils of the existing *régime :* so that individuals of the useful classes, having more leisure and less anxiety, may be able to turn their attention to the only real remedy for their position of inferiority—to wit, the supplanting of the present state by a society of equality of condition. When this great change is completely carried out, the genuine liberty of all will be secured by the free play of social forces with much less coercive interference than the present system entails.

" The following are some of the measures spoken of above :

" An Eight Hours Law.
" Prohibition of Child Labour for Wages.
" Free Maintenance of all Necessitous Children.
" Equal Payment of Men and Women for Equal Work.
" An Adequate Minimum Wage for all Adults Employed in the Government and Municipal Services, or in any Monopolies, such as Railways, enjoying State Privileges.
" Suppression of all Sub-contracting and Sweating.
" Universal Suffrage for all Adults, Men and Women alike.
" Public Payment for all Public Service.

" The inevitable economic development points to the direct absorption by the State, as an organised democracy, of monopolies which have been granted to, or constituted by, companies, and their immediate conversion into public services. But the railway system is of all the monopolies that which could be most easily and conveniently so converted. It is certain that no attempt to reorganise industry on the land can be successful so long as the railways are in private hands, and excessive rates of carriage are charged. Recent events have hastened on the socialist solution of this particular question. and the disinclination of boards of directors to adopt improvements

which would cheapen freight, prove that in this, as in other cases, English capitalists, far from being enlightened by competition, are blinded by it even to their own interests.

"In other directions the growth of combination, as with banks, shipping companies, and huge limited liability concerns, organised both for production and distribution, show that the time is ripe for socialist organisation. The economic development in this direction is already so far advanced that the socialisation of production and distribution on the economic side of things can easily and at once begin, when the people have made up their minds to overthrow privilege and monopoly. In order to effect the change from capitalism to co-operation, from unconscious revolt to conscious reorganisation, it is necessary that we Socialists should constitute ourselves into a distinct political party with definite aims, marching steadily along our own highway without reference to the convenience of political factions.

"We have thus stated the main principles and the broad strategy on which, as we believe, all Socialists may combine to act with vigour. The opportunity for deliberate and determined action is now always with us, and local autonomy in all local matters will still leave the fullest outlet for national and international Socialism. We therefore confidently appeal to all Socialists to sink their individual crotchets in a business-like endeavour to realise in our own day that complete communisation of industry for which the economic forms are ready and the minds of the people are almost prepared."

III. INDIVIDUALISM. — In speculative philosophy the term Individualism bears two acceptations. It has been applied to designate the theory which would explain the universe by the agency of a multitude of uncreated, individuated forces or wills. In this sense we hear of the Individualism of Leibnitz, of Bahnsen, and others. More frequently, however, what is meant by Individualism in this sphere of thought is the theory which represents the individual consciousness as the ultimate ground of all knowledge and certitude. In this sense one speaks of the Individualism of Descartes or Rousseau, or of the individualistic character of the philosophy of the eighteenth century. Obviously in neither of these senses is the term Individualism the antithesis of Socialism.

It is otherwise in the spheres of religion, ethics, politics, and economics. Individualism, like Socialism, may be religious, ethical, political, or economical. And in all these spheres Individualism is, like Socialism, only partially realisable. There can be no complete Socialism, for society in entirely sacrificing the individual must annihilate itself. There can be no complete Individualism, for the individual is inseparable from society, lives, moves, and has his being in society. Both Individualism and Socialism can only exist as tendencies or approximations to unattainable and self-contradictory ideals created by irrational and excessive abstraction. Of course, the more individualistic a man is the more Socialism will he fancy that he sees, and the more socialistic he is the readier will he be to charge other men with Individualism. One who does justice to the rights both of the individual and of society will probably conclude that Individualists are no

so numerous as they are often represented to be, and that many who call themselves Socialists do so without much reason.

There may be Individualism as well as Socialism in the sphere of religion, although the history of religion clearly shows that socialistic have here been far more powerful than individualistic forces.

The teaching of Christ has been often represented as socialistic, and even as communistic. A well-known socialist writer, Mr. E. Belfort Bax, however, often insists on what he calls its "one-sided, introspective, and individualistic character." An impartial examination of it will lead, I think, to the conclusion that it was so comprehensive and harmonious as to be neither individualistic nor socialistic. While worthily estimating the value and dignity of the individual soul, it kept ever in view the claims both of brotherhood and of the kingdom of God.

The Mediæval Church exalted to the utmost social authority as embodied in the Church. The Reformers demanded that churchly authority should only be allowed in so far as it could justify itself to individual reason, to private judgment. This constitutes what is called "the individualism of Protestantism." Whether it ought to be so called or not should be decided by determining whether or not the demand was excessive. To me it seems that it was not nearly large enough; that every external authority is bound to prove its claims reasonable; and that there is no real Individualism in insisting that every external and social authority should do so.

There have been some religious teachers who have expressly claimed to be individualists,—for instance, William Maccall and the Dane, S. Kierkegaard. In Martensen's "Christian Ethics" (vol. i., pp. 202-36) will be found a valuable study on the Individualism of the latter and of Alexander Vinet. Vinet, however, while insisting strongly on the importance of individuality, expressly disclaimed "Individualism."

Ethical Individualism has made itself visible in egoistic hedonism, the selfish theory, the utilitarianism of personal interest. It has assumed various phases. It was maintained both in the Cyrenaic and Epicurean schools of antiquity. In later times we find it represented by Hobbes, Mandeville, Paley, Helvetius, Max Stirner, etc. It makes duty identical with personal interest. It judges of actions solely by their consequences, and yet leaves out of account their effects on society. At the same time, by an instructive inconsistency, the ethical Individualist, while resolving virtue into a regard to personal interest, is generally found attempting to justify it by its conduciveness to the interest of society. Although Mandeville went so far as to plead the cause of "private vices" it was on the ground that they were "public benefits." The frightful egoism of Max Stirner led him to socialistic conclusions which Marx and Lassalle re-advanced. Socialism, in like manner,

not only may be, but largely is, ethically individualistic, a generalised egoism, by no means the altruistic system which it is often represented as being.*

The antithesis of Individualism and Socialism is fundamental in politics and political history. The aim of true politics is to eliminate and reject what is erroneous and excessive both in Political Individualism and Political Socialism, and to accept, develop, and conciliate what is true in both. Each of them, it must be observed, not only does positive injustice to the truth which is in the other, but also necessarily imperfect justice to the truth which is in itself. Political Individualism robs society, but thereby impoverishes the individual. Political Socialism represses the liberty of the individual, but thereby saps the strength of the State. This is what is meant by those who

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* Various writers have already pointed out that there is a sense in which Socialism is an extremely individualistic theory. Some of them are mentioned in the following quotation from Mr. J. S. Mackenzie's admirable "Introduction to Social Philosophy" (p. 250): "It may be well to remark at this point that, in one sense, the contrast which is commonly drawn between Individualism and Socialism is not well founded. Socialism in many cases, as Schäffle has trenchantly pointed out (Aussichtslosigkeit der Socialdemokratie, p. 13) is little more than Individualism run mad. Lassalle (the most brilliant of the Socialists) also recognised that Socialism is in reality individualistic. *Cf.* also Stirling's 'Philosophy of Law,' p. 59, and Rae's 'Contemporary Socialism,' p. 387. Indeed, the readiness with which extreme Radicalism passes into Socialism (unless it be regarded as merely an illustration of the principle that 'extremes meet') may be taken as a sufficient evidence that Socialism is not in reality opposed to Individualism. No doubt, Socialism is really opposed to a certain species of Individualism—viz., to the principle of individual *liberty*. But, in like manner, the principle of individual liberty is opposed to *another* species of Individualism—viz., to the principle of individual *equality*. The real antithesis to Individualism would be found rather in the ideal of an aristocratic polity, established with a view to the production of the best *State*, as distinguished from the production of the happiest condition of its individual members. The most celebrated instance of such an ideal (that sketched in the *Republic* of Plato) happens to be also to a large extent socialistic; but this is in the main an accident."

Adolf Held, in his "Sozialismus, etc.," 1878, was, so far as I am aware, the first adequately to emphasise the fact that the Socialism of "Social Democracy" was extreme Individualism, the natural and historical outgrowth of Liberalism, or, as Mr. Mackenzie says, Radicalism. It is one of the merits, however, of the Katheder-Socialisten as a class to have seen clearly that the last merit which can be assigned to the Collectivist Socialists is that of entertaining any truly organic idea of society. Individualism and Socialism are only antithetic in that Individualism sacrifices social right to individual licence, and Socialism sacrifices individual liberty to social arbitrariness. What Socialism means by "society" is merely an aggregate or majority of individuals, assumed to be entitled to suppress individual liberty in order to obtain, as far as possible, equality of individual enjoyment. Ethically, Socialism is an individualistic equalitarian hedonism. In the sense in which Individualism and Socialism are opposite extremes they are extremes which meet in Anarchism, which practically regards every person as entitled alike to enjoy absolute liberty as an individual and to exercise the entire authority of society.

have said that *Individualism* is the *true Socialism*, as well as by those who have pronounced *Socialism* to be the *true Individualism*. It is to be regretted that they could not find a less absurd mode of giving expression to so very sound and certain a thought. How political and general history has moved throughout the world, and from age to age, between the individualistic and socialistic extremes, has been shown in a masterly manner by the late Fr. Laurent, of Ghent, in the eighteen volumes of his "Études sur l'Histoire de l'Humanité." Laurent always uses the terms Individualism and Socialism in what seems to me a consistent way; and certainly no one has shown so clearly and fully the reasons which history supplies to warn nations to beware of both Political Individualism and Political Socialism.*

In the sphere of economics, Individualism has been differentiated from Socialism in several ways. According to M. Maurice Block, for example, the fundamental distinction between them is that the former recognises the right of private property, and the latter wholly or largely denies it. He admits, however, that he sees objections to thus employing the term Individualism, and that he does so because it is customary.† He does not indicate his objections; but one very obvious objection is that few of those who fully acknowledge the legitimacy of private property will consent to be classed as individualists. The denial of that legitimacy all will admit to be a sure mark of Socialism; the recognition of it few will accept as an equally certain sign of Individualism.

Socialists generally mean by Economic Individualism the theory which affirms that individuals are entitled to exercise their energies in economic enterprises unimpeded by Governments so far as they do not contravene the rights of others, so far as they do not injure or wrong their fellows: in other words, they generally class as Individualists all economists who have acknowledged the substantial truth of what has been called "the system of natural liberty." But to justify this employment of the terms in question it would be necessary for them to show that the economists to whom they refer really did, as a class, ascribe more freedom to the individual and less authority to the State than were their due; and that their economic theory naturally led them to commit these errors. This Socialists have not done, although some of them have made a kind of show of doing it by

* There is also a profound discussion of both in the fourth book of Professor Carle's "Vita del Diritto." Mr. Wordsworth Donisthorpe has given us a professedly individualistic theory of politics in his able treatise "Individualism: A System of Politics," 1889. He effectively assails, however, "extreme Individualists;" and, perhaps, no economist not a Socialist accepts so fully the ordinary socialistic teaching regarding "the iron law" and the evil effects of the wage-system. He is vigorous and ingenious, especially in his criticism.

† "Les Progrès de la Science Économique," t. i. p. 199. The chapter on "Individualism and Socialism" in this work is very learned and judicious.

representing the exceptional exaggerations of a few economic writers as the common and fundamental principles of "economic orthodoxy."

Cohn, Held, Wagner, and other Katheder-Socialisten have represented Individualism and Socialism as complementary and equally legitimate principles, the one springing from a sense of what the individual is entitled to as a personal and free being, and the other from a perception of the obligation of the State to aim at the general good of society. They affirm that Individualism and Socialism are both essential to the development of the economic life, and that neither ever quite excludes the other, although they coexist in different degrees of strength at different times. Yet they profess to keep clear of Individualism and to teach Socialism; and describe their own so-called Socialism as "true Socialism" or "Socialism," and Communism and Collectivism as forms of a "false" or "extreme" Socialism, while they either treat Individualism as itself "an extreme," or identify with "extreme Individualism" the theory of natural economic liberty even when held by those who fully acknowledge that the rulers and also the individual members of a nation are morally bound to promote as far as they can the common welfare. The inconsistency of this procedure is obvious, but not its fairness.

[Reference may be made with advantage to "Collectivism and Industrial Evolution" by Emile Vandervelde (translated by Rev. R. P. Farley, B.A.). This work is published by the I. L. P. at 1s. 6d, cloth].

CHAPTER IV

SOCIALISM AND LABOUR

SOCIALISM seeks to reconstruct and to reorganise the whole social system, and to effect a vast improvement in every department of human life. But it aims primarily and especially at a thorough reorganisation of industry and property; at such an alteration of the conditions and arrangements as to the production, distribution, and enjoyment of wealth as will abolish poverty and remove the discontent of the operative classes. While it contemplates a revolution in the intellectual, religious, moral, and political state of mankind, it acknowledges and affirms that this must be preceded and determined by a revolution in their economic state. It follows that while Socialists, in attempting to bring about the vast social revolution which they have in view, are bound to have a new theory as to the proper constitution of society as a whole, they are especially bound to have a new theory as to the proper economic constitution of society; to have other and more correct opinions as to the subjects and problems of which economic science treats than mere social reformers and ordinary economists; and, in a word, to have a political economy of their own. New doctrines as to labour, land, and capital, money and credit, wages, profits, interest, rent, taxes, and the like, are needed to justify the new measures which are required to bring about the socialist revolution.

Socialists cannot be fairly charged with failing to recognise the necessity and the obligation herein implied. They frankly claim to have a political economy of their own, entitled to displace that which has been prevalent; and they demand that their system shall be judged of chiefly by that portion of its teaching which constitutes its political economy. Whatever merits they may assign to their philosophical, religious, and ethical theories, they hold them to have only a secondary and supplementary place in the socialist creed, and grant that it is not by their proof or disproof that Socialism can be either established or overthrown. They will admit no verdict on the character of Socialism to be relevant and

decisive which has failed to recognise that its answers to economic problems, its proposals for the organisation of industry and the administration of wealth are what is primary and fundamental in it.

Thus far they are, I think, perfectly right; and, therefore, I shall in the present work confine myself largely to the economics of Socialism. Of course, it is only possible to consider even the economic teaching of Socialism on a limited number of points; and naturally the selected portion of its teaching should be that which is most obviously crucial as regards the truth or falsity of the socialist system, and which is concerned with questions of the widest range of interest. What Socialism teaches on the subject of labour certainly meets this requirement. To the consideration of the socialist doctrine of labour let us now accordingly turn.

The importance of true and the danger of false teaching in regard to labour can hardly be exaggerated. The history of labour is one in many respects most painful to contemplate. For although it is a wonderful manifestation of the power, ingenuity, and perseverance of man, it is also a most deplorable exhibition of his selfishness, injustice, and cruelty. It is the history of secret or open war from the earliest times, and over the whole earth, between rich and poor, masters and servants, labour and capital. It shows us men not only gradually subduing nature, so as to render her forces obedient to their wills and subservient to their good, but constantly engaged in a keen and selfish struggle with one another, productive of enormous misery. Pride and envy, merciless oppression and mad revolt, wicked greed and wanton waste have displayed themselves in it to a humiliating extent, and have left behind them in every land a heritage of woe, a direful legacy of mischievous prejudices and evil passions.

On no subject is it at present so easy to satisfy prejudice and to inflame passion. Religious animosities are now nearly extinct among all peoples in the first ranks of civilisation, and those who endeavour to revive them talk and strive without effect. Merely political distinctions are losing their sharpness and their power to divide, and political parties are finding that their old battle cries no longer evoke the old enthusiasm, and that their principles have either been discredited or generally acknowledged and appropriated. But the labour question is in all lands agitated with passion

fierceness, and gives rise, in many instances, to violence, conspiracy, assassination, and insurrection. It is the distinctively burning question of the Europe of to-day, as the religious question was of the Europe of the Reformation period, and the political question of the Europe of the Revolution epoch. And it burns so intensely that the spokesmen and leaders of the labour party may easily, by the errors and excesses which spring from ignorance, recklessness, or ambition, as seriously dishonour and compromise their cause, and produce as terrible social disasters, as did the fanatics and intriguers who, under the plea of zeal for religious and civil liberty, brought disgrace on the Reformation and the Revolution.

If they do so they will be even more guilty than were their prototypes. The excesses of fanaticism are growing always less excusable, seeing that it is becoming always more obvious that they are unnecessary. It might well seem doubtful at the time of the Reformation whether the cause of religious freedom would triumph or not. But in the twentieth century, and in countries where speech is free, where public opinion is of enormous influence, and political power is in the hands of the majority of the people, it surely ought to be manifest to all sane human beings that the just claims of labour will and must be acknowledged, and that none the less speedily or completely for being unassociated or uncontaminated with unreasonableness and disorder.

Unfortunately many Socialists refuse to acquiesce in this view of the situation. They have come to the conclusion that the condition of the labouring classes is so bad that the first and chief duty of those who befriend them is to spread among them, as widely and deeply as possible, discontent with their lot.* And, accordingly they concentrate their efforts on the attainment of that end. By the selection only of what suits their purpose, by the omission of all facts, however certain and relevant, which would contravene it, and by lavishness in exaggeration, the past and the present of the labouring classes are so delineated as to embitter their feelings.

[* "We are accused of preaching discontent and stirring up actual conflict. We do preach discontent, and we mean to preach discontent, and we mean, if we can, to stir up actual conflict." See "Will Socialism Benefit the English People?" by Mr. H. M. Hyndman. Twentieth Century Press, Ltd., 1907. Reference should also be made to "The Class War," by Mr. James Leatham, who is a prominent member of the I.L.P. Both these works are circulated by the Social Democratic Federation.]

and pervert their judgments, while their future is portrayed in the colours of fancy best adapted to deepen the effect produced by the falsification of history and the misrepresentation of actuality.

Further, assertions the most untrue, yet which are sure to be readily believed by many, and which cannot fail to produce discontent as widely as they are believed, are boldly and incessantly made in all ways and forms likely to gain for them acceptance. I refer to such assertions as these : that the labourers do all the work and are entitled to all the wealth of the world ; that the only reason why they require to toil either long or hard is that they are plundered by privileged idlers to the extent of a half or three-fourths of what is due for their services ; that capitalists are their enemies ; that mechanical inventions have been of little, if any, benefit to them ; that they are as a class constantly growing poorer, while their employers are constantly growing richer ;* that as the recipients of wages they are slaves under " an iron law " which is ever pressing them down to a bare subsistence ; that industrial freedom, or competition, is essentially immoral and pernicious, while compulsory industrial organisation, or collectivist co-operation, would make society virtuous and happy ; and that by an act of simple justice—the expropriation of the wealthy and the nationalisation of land and all other means of production—manifold and immense material and moral advantages would at once and infallibly be obtained.

Vast discontent may be produced by such procedure and teaching, but it can only be a most dangerous and destructive discontent. It is a false discontent, because founded on falsehood. It is entirely different from the legitimate discontent which the labouring classes may justly feel, and may properly be taught to feel ; the discontent which is founded on avoidable hardships, on real wrongs, on a correct perception of the many weak points, the many grievous sores, the many deeply engrained vices of our industrial and social constitution. This latter sort of discontent is indispensable to the progress of the labouring classes ; but nothing save mischief can result either to them or to others from a discontent which is engendered by error.

[* This statement is admitted to be untrue, if a comparison is made between the years 1800 and 1900, even by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. See " Socialism and Society," p. 1. *n.*]

Socialism in its latest and most developed form evolves its doctrine of labour from the notion, unfortunately to some extent sanctioned by certain economists of high standing, that labour is the sole source of wealth; that an object has value only in so far as it is the result of human toil; that every economic product is merely, as has been said, "a definite mass of congealed labour-time." It insists that the value of an object ought to be estimated entirely according to the quantity of labour it has cost, the quantity being measured by the average time which it takes to perform it. All commodities, it maintains, are so many "crystallisations of human activity;" and all of them which require the same extent of time to produce them are of the same value. Any labour is equivalent to all other labour, because it equally represents the mean or average of social labour. From this view of the function of labour in the economic process Socialists draw the inference that as labourers alone produce all wealth they alone should enjoy it; that the just wage of a workman is all that he produces or its full value; that whatever a landlord or capitalist deducts from this is robbery; and that such robbery is the great cause of poverty and its attendant evils.

This teaching seems to me a mass of congealed fallacies. Labour alone can produce nothing, can create no particle of wealth, can satisfy no economic want. All labour which is alone is pure waste. Labour, instead of being the source of all value, is itself only of value in so far as it results in removing discomfort or yielding gratification, and such labour is never alone, but always inseparably conjoined with natural agents, capital, and intelligence. We might use our arms and legs as vigorously and as long as we pleased in empty space, but we could never become rich by thus spending our strength. Man does not create. He produces wealth only by modifying the materials and applying the forces of nature so as to serve his purposes and satisfy his desires. He can by his labour effect certain changes on natural things; he can change their condition and form, can transfer them from one place to another, from one time to another, from one person to another; but by his utmost energy and ingenuity he can do no more. Nature supplies to labour the materials of wealth, and to what extent labour can make wealth depends largely on the quantity and the quality of the materials which it has to work upon. Labour of itself

generates no wealth, but derives it from, and is dependent for it on, nature.*

That nature supplies to labour the materials on which it has to operate, and that these materials are useful, are, of course, truths so obvious that they can be denied by no one; and we are not charging Socialists with denying them. What we charge them with is denying that what nature gives affects the relative worth of things, their cheapness or dearness, their value in exchange.

Karl Marx himself says: "The use-values, coat, linen, etc., *i.e.* the bodies of commodities, are combinations of two elements—matter and labour. If we take away the useful labour expended upon them, a material substratum is always left, which is furnished by nature without the help of man. The latter can work only as nature does, that is by changing the form of matter. Nay, more, in this work of changing the form he is constantly helped by natural forces. We see, then, that labour is not the only source of material wealth, of use-values produced by labour. As William Petty puts it, labour is its father and the earth its mother."†

This would be quite satisfactory if Marx allowed that the matter of commodities counted for anything in the purchase or price of them; that the mother had a part as well as the father in the production of economic wealth. But this Marx denies. And his whole theory of the exploitation of labour rests on the denial. He represents labour as the sole source of the value of everything; the labour spent on anything as alone the just price of it.

What a preposterous notion! Are we to believe that sea-sand will be worth more than gold-dust if we only spend more labour on it? That the difference between the value of a diamond and an Elie ruby is exactly measurable by the difference in the amount of trouble which it takes to find each of them? Are we to deny that a fertile field and a seam of good coal cannot have a high exchange value, seeing that they are not products of labour? There is a class of goods the exchange value of which may be reasonably affirmed to be regulated by labour; but to say that labour is the sole source, and the only true measure of value, and that nature contributes nothing to value and differences of value, is an amazing absurdity.

* See Mill's "Political Economy," Book I, ch. I.
† "Capital," vol. i., p. 10 (Engl. tr.).

How did Marx fall into it? Because the belief of it was necessary to him. It was indispensable to his convincing labourers that they were robbed that he should feel able to assure them that they produced all value, and that consequently they were entitled to possess collectively all wealth. People are very apt to believe what they wish to believe. Marx was no exception to the rule.*

But, further, two celebrated economists, the two for whom Marx had most respect, Adam Smith and David Ricardo, had in some measure fallen into the same error. Ricardo, for instance, had gone so far as to write thus: "Gold and silver, like all other commodities, are valuable only in proportion to the quantity of labour necessary to produce them, and bring them to market. Gold is about fifteen times dearer than silver, not because there is a greater demand for it, nor because the supply of silver is fifteen times greater than that of gold, but solely because fifteen times the quantity of labour is necessary to procure a given quantity of it."† Surely these words, however, should have been of themselves enough to open the eyes of an attentive reader to the erroneousness of the hypothesis which they imply. What possible justification can there be for a statement so extravagant as that it takes fifteen times more labour to procure a given quantity of gold than the same quantity of silver? It does not take even double the quantity. It does not require more labour to extract or gather gold than to work in a coal or a tin mine. Gold is not especially difficult, laborious, or costly to work. Its price relatively to silver depends obviously very much on its quantity relatively to that of silver, and very little on difference either in the quantity or quality of the labour employed on them.

Labour alone, labour independent of nature, can produce nothing. Labour alone, labour independent of nature, can confer value on nothing. It can no more absolutely create the value of commodities than it can create commodities themselves. Mother Nature helps always, but in infinitely varying degrees, to produce both economic commodities and their values.

Besides, in order that there may be labour there must be labourers. Labour without labourers is a nonsensical abstraction. But a

[* See Mallock's "A Critical Examination of Socialism," ch. 3, "The Root Error of the Marxian Theory." Murray, 1908.]

† "Principles of Political Economy, etc.," p. 340 (Gonner's edition).

labourer is the result of a great deal of saving, represents a large amount of capital, not his own. For years before he could do any productive labour his parents or other benefactors had to feed and clothe, lodge, tend, and educate him; and he may well feel bound to repay them in some measure for those sacrifices of theirs to which he owes his strength and power to labour. After he has acquired power to labour he must, if without capital of his own, contract and co-operate with someone who has it, in order that he may be provided with the necessaries of life and the means of production, so as to be free to work usefully and effectively; but he cannot reasonably expect that he will get the help of the capitalist without giving an equivalent. The manufacturer did not get the buildings, machinery, materials, etc., which compose his capital for nothing; he paid for them, and is fully entitled to be paid for the use of them.

Further, the intelligence which foresees when, where, and how labour may be most profitably applied, which, by discoveries, inventions, shrewdness, and watchfulness, increases its effectiveness, saves it from waste, and secures good markets for its products —the intelligence which superintends and directs industrial enterprises—is as clearly entitled to be remunerated as is the exertion of muscular force in the execution of industrial operations. Great industries have never been created by the labours of workmen alone. They have in every instance been largely the result of the foresight and sagacity, of the powers of calculation and talent of organisation, of the patience and resourcefulness, of particular men. "There is no case on record," says Mr. Frederic Harrison, "of a body of workmen creating a new market, or founding an original enterprise."

To say, then, that labour alone is the source of wealth is as extreme and as absurd as to say that natural agents alone, or capital alone, or intelligence alone, is its source. Wealth is the result of labour, of natural agents, and of capital, intelligently combined and intelligently used. The amount of it produced in any given case depends not only on the amount of labour employed in its production, but also on the quantity of material to work on, the extent of capital engaged in the occupation, and the measure of executive and directive intelligence put forth. Hence, when wealth is produced, not only the labourer, but the supplier of material also, the owner of capital, and the managing intell

have all a right to share in it, for they have all contributed to produce it.

There is a still more decisive objection to the notion that the value of commodities is conferred on them only by the labour expended on them. It is not labour which gives value to commodities; but it is the utility of commodities, the desirability of them, the demand for them, which give value to labour. Unless things are felt to be useful, in the sense of being desirable or fitted to gratify some want, unless there be a demand for them, no labour will be spent in producing them, and for the obvious reason that the labour so spent would have no value and would neither receive nor deserve any remuneration. Labour simply as such, *i.e.*, labour viewed without reference to its end and usefulness, labour for which there is no desire or demand, is of no value, however painful or protracted it may be. The notion of resolving the value of things into the quantity of labour embodied in them, or of measuring their value by the length of time which it has taken to produce them, is thus a manifest error, and any doctrine of economic justice or scheme of social reorganisation founded upon it is condemned in advance to utter failure. To speak of a doctrine or scheme which rests on such a basis as "scientific" is an abuse of language. Any such doctrine or scheme must necessarily be utopian, a dream, a delusion.

If labour is not the sole source of wealth the whole socialist doctrine as to labour is erroneous; and, in particular, the conclusion that all wealth ought to belong to the labourers is plainly unjust.

I must add, that even if labour were the source of all wealth, the conclusion that landlords, capitalists, and non-operatives should have no share in it would be very questionable. Bastiat fully admitted the premises yet entirely denied the conclusion, as he held that the wealth which consists in rent and capital is as natural and legitimate a result of labour as that which consists in wages, and as justly owing to proprietors and capitalists as wages to workmen. I do not doubt that he could have victoriously maintained his position against any attack of Karl Marx.

Nay, more, were the Collectivism of Karl Marx established, it uld by no possibility confer on labourers what he taught them to k for as their due, the whole produce of their labours; but only

such part of it as remains after deduction of an equivalent to rents, whatever it might be called, of the wealth necessary to maintain the collective capital, and of the expenses of government and administration. That a larger share of the produce would be left for the labourers than at present is easy to assume, but not easy to prove. I shall return, however, to this subject in a later chapter.

A superficial observer, and especially, perhaps, if he is an ordinary manual labourer, is apt to fall into the mistake of supposing that the labour directly and immediately spent on a thing is the only labour involved in that thing. The shoemaker when he has finished a pair of shoes may thoughtlessly imagine that they are wholly his work, and that he is entitled to receive the whole value of them. But in this he deceives himself. He alone has not made the shoes; those who prepared his leather and formed his tools, whoever pays him a wage or lets him his shop, or finds customers for his shoes, and even the policeman, soldier, and sailor, the magistrate, the judge, and cabinet minister, who secure him from disturbance, violence, and fraud in the prosecution of his business, have all contributed to the production of the shoes, and to the worth of the shoes. It takes many more people than shoemakers to make shoes, and still more to make good markets for shoes. And so of all other things.*

Society is not even now, whatever Socialists may say to the

* Mr. Frederic Harrison, in a lecture from which I have already quoted, well says:—"Unhappily, in the current language of Socialists, we too often miss important elements which enter into all products, material or intellectual, but which are usually completely left aside. The first is the enormous part played in every product by the society itself in which it is produced, the past workers, thinkers, and managers, and the social organism at present, which alone enables us to produce at all. An ocean steamship could not be built on the Victoria Nyanza, nor could factories be established on the banks of the Aruwhimi. No one in these discussions as to 'Rights of Labour' seems to allow a penny for government, civil population, industrial habits, inherited aptitudes, stored materials, mechanical inventions, and the thousand and one traditions of the past and appliances of civil organisation, without which no complex thing could be produced at all. And they entirely leave out of sight posterity. That is to say, socialist reasoners are apt to leave out of account society altogether. And society—that is, the social organism in the past *plus* the social organism of the moment—is something entirely distinct from the particular workmen of a given factory or pit, and indeed has interests and claims opposed to theirs. Thus society, which Socialists ought to be the very last to forget, is the indispensable antecedent, and very largely the creator, of every product." ("Moral and Religious Socialism," p. 15.)

contrary, essentially or mainly anarchy and confusion and strife. A remarkable and beneficent order, a marvellous natural organisation, is to be seen in it when we look a little below the surface. All classes composing it are wondrously bound together, intimately dependent on one another, and constantly co-operating even when they have no wish to do so, no consciousness that they are doing so; yea, co-operating often in and through their very competition.

The teaching in economics then, which leads any class of men to believe that they alone produce wealth, will not bear examination, and can only do harm. Whoever seeks, for example, to persuade workmen that it is their labour alone which has produced the wealth of the world, and that therefore for a capitalist or an inventor to be rich while workmen are poor is an injustice, is labouring to mislead them. He is fully warranted, indeed, in advising them to look carefully to their own interests, and to be unitedly on the alert that capitalists and inventors do not get more than their fair share of the produce of labour; but if he goes farther, and denies that the capitalist and the inventor have real claims, and large claims, to remuneration out of the produce of labour, he becomes a sower of tares, a breeder of mischief. But for capitalists and inventors, workmen would be either much poorer or much fewer than they are.

Capitalists and inventors, of course, without the workmen would have been as helpless as the workmen without them. But as in war the fact that officers cannot do without soldiers any more than soldiers without officers is no reason for representing officers as contributing nothing to victories, or for sowing dissension between officers and privates, so is it in industry with regard to employers and employed. A great general, although not striking a blow with his own hand, may do more to determine the success of a campaign than many thousands of the actual fighters; and, in like manner, a great capitalist endowed with commercial genius may count for more in the achievements of industry than multitudes of those who carry into effect what he devises and commands. The indebtedness of labour to capital is enormous; its indebtedness to science and invention is also enormous; and it is as wrong for labour to ignore this as for capital, science, and invention to ignore their enormous indebtedness to labour.

When Socialists fail to establish that labour alone originates

and deserves wealth, they naturally proceed to argue that it at least produces more than is acknowledged, and is entitled to more than it receives. They insist that under the present reign of competition the distribution of the produce of industry is unjust; that the labourer gets too little and the capitalist too much; that too little goes to wages, too much to profits and rents. Competition, "anarchic individualist competition," is denounced with heartiest vehemence. It is represented as internecine war, as essentially inhuman and immoral, as the hateful process through which the iron law of wages operates, as the root of manifold evils and iniquities, and especially as the main cause of the prevalence of starvation and misery alongside of luxury and waste.

Even this part of the plea for Socialism, however, is not made out, although the eloquence which has been expended on it will be readily granted to have been often generous in spirit and motive, and cannot be denied to have been popularly most effective. It is quite possible, and even quite common, for capital as well as labour to get too little remuneration. Labour may, and not infrequently does, ask more than capital can give. The griefs and losses of capital are not imaginary, nor few, nor light. At the same time it is perfectly true that labour in its conflict or co-operation with capital often gets too little, and is always in danger of getting too little. And it is most desirable that it should obtain all that is due to it, all that it possibly can, consistently with that general industrial and social prosperity on which its own welfare depends. But even under the reign of competition it is far from powerless to obtain this. With adequate and correct knowledge of the labour market and of what may in each trade under actual circumstances be reasonably and safely demanded, and with organisation and energy to give effect to its demands and to defend its interests, it can hopefully hold its own in any controversy which it may have with capital; and under the reign of competition this knowledge, energy, and organisation it has acquired to a remarkable extent, and is constantly increasing and perfecting.* Would it be able to struggle as effectively against the authoritative and unified administration of capital under the reign of Collectivism?

[* In view of the combinations amongst employers during the last few years, it is unlikely that this expression of opinion will meet with the approval of the Socialist.]

It is further true that where there is competition there must be temptation to have recourse to ignoble and unfair means of success, to lying and cheating, to cruelty and injustice. Where competitors are numerous and competition keen, many will probably succumb to the temptation. But if this happens it will be their own fault. Daily experience amply testifies that, in spite of competition, merchants and operatives can be not only truthful and honest, but even generous and self-denying. The excesses to which competition may lead afford no reason for the suppression of competition; they afford a reason merely for restraining it within moral and rational limits, for preventing or punishing hurtful or wicked conduct prompted by greed of gain.

And this is a task which the State is clearly bound to undertake. Whatever else the State may be, it is society organised for the maintenance and realisation of justice. A State which does not hold the balance equal between conflicting interests and parties, which allows any one class of its citizens to oppress or to plunder any other class, which does not prevent individuals from doing wrong or injury to the community, is a State which fails to justify its own existence. It manifestly does not perform its duty nor fulfil its mission. The State is an essentially ethical organism and institute; and the laws of ethics ought to determine, to permeate, and to regulate the entire economic life. The more of industrial freedom and general liberty the members of the State enjoy, not the less but the more scope and need are there for the ethical superintendence and intervention of the State. Those who suppose that an ample and practical recognition of the ethical character and functions of the State is a distinctive feature of Socialism, or is incompatible with approval of the competition inseparable from industrial freedom, are utterly mistaken.

Again, wherever competition prevails some must succeed and others fail, some will be at the front and others in the rear. This does not imply that those who fail or fall behind will be absolutely worse off than they would have been had no competition existed. There may be universal competition and yet universal improvement. After nearly a century of industrial and capitalist competition in this country, pauperism is not found to have grown in proportion either to wealth or population; it is found to have greatly decreased relatively to both. Eighty years ago there were

as many paupers in London as there are now, although it has more than tripled its population in the interval.* During the last forty years, "the machinery epoch," in which competition has been at its keenest, labour has been better remunerated relatively to capital than at any former epoch, and the general improvement in the condition of the labouring population has been most marked. Competition is not the direct or necessary cause of poverty, misery, or crime, and its suppression would not bring about their removal.

As under the reign of competition, however, these evils largely exist, and as in all our large centres of population many of the physically, intellectually, and morally weak or lethargic, and many who are unfavourably situated, break utterly down, and fall into the loathsome mass of pauperism and crime, which is the standing reproach and shame of our civilisation, society ought undoubtedly to occupy itself in an earnest endeavour to prevent and suppress misery and vice. To abandon the fallen and the unfortunate to their fate, to say "let the fittest survive," is unchristian and inhuman; it is even inexpedient, and sure to degrade, corrupt, and weaken a people. Mr. Spencer has done grievous injustice to his own theory of development in representing it as involving such a conclusion. The State, it seems to me, is clearly under the law of duty in relation to the destitute and the helpless. If, indeed, their wants can be more wisely and efficiently relieved by individual charity or special organisations than by its own intervention, then, of course, it ought not to intervene; but if this is not the case it must act itself, and supplement private charity in so far as it is insufficient, taking due care neither to deaden the germs of self-help nor to dry up the sources of voluntary liberality. It is further its duty to watch over the institutions and administration of private charity, lest they increase and confirm, as they so often do, the very evils which they are intended to diminish and remove.

And now, after these elucidations, I do not hesitate to give my entire assent to the principle of industrial competition, and to reject the antagonistic principle of Socialism as altogether erroneous and pernicious. What really is the principle of industrial competition assailed? Nothing less, but, also nothing more, than the

[* This statement, although true fifteen years ago, cannot be set down as accurate now. In fact, in 1906 the actual number of paupers was greater than it had been for some years. See "Socialism and Society" (MacDonald), p. 9.]

principle of industrial liberty; than the affirmation of a man's right to labour, and to live by his labour, as he judges to be best and most expedient so long as he does not thereby wrong and injure his fellow-men. Whatever Socialists may say to the contrary, the principle of competition, or *laisser faire*, has never been otherwise understood by economists; and thus understood, it is simply identical with liberty in the sphere of economics, and one form of that liberty which makes man a moral personality.

Is it, then, unchristian? If it is, so much the worse for Christianity. Any religion which denies man to be thus far free must be itself so far false. Is the principle immoral? On the contrary, it is the recognition of a moral right, the affirmation that man is a free moral being or law unto himself in regard to his own labour. Is it unjust? No, because it is limited by justice. Is it a warrant for selfishness, for unneighbourly or unbrotherly dealing, for disregarding the interest of the community at large? It may seem so at the first glance, and socialist writers continually assume that it must be so. But this view is most superficial, as Bishop Butler conclusively showed long ago.

Competition, as the term is used in economics, implies self-love, a regard of one's own interest; altruism is not the immediate source of any merely business transaction. But he who confounds self-love with selfishness, or supposes that regard to one's own interest implies disregard of or aversion to the interests of others, or imagines that there is any natural or peculiar opposition between self-love and benevolence, is an inaccurate observer and thinker, and shows an ignorance of rudimentary mental and moral truths which one does not expect to find displayed by educated Englishmen, the countrymen of Bishop Butler. A really reasonable regard to a man's own interest has not an anti-social but a social tendency. Men cannot truly, or on the whole and in the long run, secure their own good by looking only to their own good. Every man in order to attain his own true good must work towards the good of others; and so every class of men, in order to promote their own true interest, must have in view also what is best for the community. Aiming at the higher end is the indispensable condition of gaining the lower end.

Then, we must not forget to ask, What is the principle which Socialism has to oppose to, and which it would substitute for,

competition? Is it co-operation? Certainly not. If men are entitled to be free to compete, they are at the same time and to the same extent entitled to co-operate. If they would compete successfully they must also largely co-operate. With the utmost freedom of competition prevailing, the workmen of England have become more closely united, more practically fraternal, and more strongly and healthily organised, than those of countries fettered by so-called protection. The real opposite of competition or liberty is compulsion or slavery, the authoritative assignment to each man of the work which he has to do. This is what genuine Socialism, what Collectivism, proffers us. This is its distinctive principle; it is also its decisive condemnation. It means robbing man of his true self, of what gives to his soul and conduct dignity and worth. It is treating man as a thing or a beast, not as a person. The organisation of labour or of society, thus to be obtained, would be dearly bought whatever might be the material advantages which it conferred. These advantages would probably be very few and slight, and the disadvantages numerous and enormous.

Socialists dwell on what they regard as the injustice of the rate of wages being fixed by competition according to the proportion of supply and demand. The truth is that if the rate were exactly fixed between real supply and demand, it would be quite justly fixed. Injustice comes in because it is often not so fixed. Absolute justice is difficult to obtain in this world. Who hopes to see a perfectly just income-tax? Is there any bargain, any at least not of the very simplest kind, in which one of the parties does not get more and the other less than is exactly right? I have no doubt that labourers have often the worst of it in their contracts with capitalists, and would approve whatever can aid them to get their proper share of the produce of industry. But to encourage them to quarrel with the law of supply and demand, instead of to study its operations and to act accordingly, is as absurd as it would be to attempt to enrage us against the law of gravitation. The law of gravitation will break our necks, if we do not take care. The law of supply and demand will leave us without a penny, if we do not take care. The lesson is, Take care; it is not, Set aside the law.

Socialists have failed to show that any other method of determining the rate of wages due to labour would be as just as the one which they condemn. Some have proposed as a substitute for it

an equal distribution of the produce; they would pay every man alike. It is a very simple plan, but also a very unjust one. Men differ much in ability, and their labours differ much in quality and worth. To ignore these differences—to treat mere "botching" and genuine work, unskilled and skilled labour, carelessness and carefulness, stupidity and genius, as equal—would be essentially unjust, dishonouring to labour, discouraging to talent, energy, and conscientiousness, and hurtful to society.

Saint-Simon and others have said, *distribute in proportion to ability*, give to every man according to his capacities. But even if it is granted that this shows a sense of justice, how is it to be acted on? How is society to ascertain and judge of men's abilities unless by letting them have free scope to show what they can do; or how can it estimate the worth of what they do except by finding out what value is assigned to it by those who set any value upon it?

Louis Blanc said, *distribute according to wants;* take from men according to their abilities and give to them according to their needs. He did not explain what he meant by a want, or what wants he meant. But whatever he meant, we may be sure that if his formula were to be acted on in any society, abilities would decrease and wants increase in that society in a very remarkable manner.

Karl Marx, as I have previously mentioned, maintains that *the value of work should be estimated according to the quantity of socially necessary labour expended, or, in equivalent terms, according to the time which must be on the average occupied in the work.* There is neither reasonableness nor justice in this view. Mere expenditure of labour does not produce any value, and is not entitled to any remuneration. A man may labour long and hard in producing something in which nobody can see any use or beauty. If he does so he will get nothing for his labour, and he has no right to expect anything for it. He may expend ten hours' labour in producing what there is so little demand for that he will get merely the pay of one hour's work for it. If he says that this is not fair; that as it has cost him ten hours' work it is worth ten hours' work; he will be told that it is only worth that in his eyes, and because he has wasted nine hours' work upon it. It is impossible to eliminate from the determination of value the elements of use, demand, rarity, limitation, and to fix it exclusively by quantity or duration of labour.

Besides, the doctrine of Marx leaves out of account the infinite differences of quality in labour, and implicitly reduces the labour of rare intelligence, of exquisite artistic taste, and supreme genius to the level of the mere muscular exertion which may be replaced with advantage, wherever possible, by the action of a machine or an animal. In a word, it is as dishonouring to human labour, as unjust and discouraging to talent and merit in human labour, as the doctrine of Communism itself. Yet this doctrine Marx regarded as the very corner-stone of his Collectivism. On it he rested entirely his hope of a just payment of labour employed in production within the collectivist community. Every suggestion which he has made, or which his followers have made, as to the administration of distribution in the collectivist world, is but an application of it. If it is not true, the "labour certificates" and "labour cheques," of which we have heard so much, can be no better than false bank-notes. That a system built on such a corner-stone should have obtained the confidence of so many persons shows how prevalent credulity still is.

So long as Socialists cannot give us better rules than those just indicated for the remuneration of labour, or for the distribution of the produce of industry among those concerned in production, we must keep to the method to which we are accustomed. It may not always work entirely to our satisfaction. Still it works with some considerable measure of justice and success on the whole, is not incapable of being improved, and does not prevent co-operation, industrial partnership, participation in profits, or other like schemes, being tried. But socialist plans, so far as yet divulged, are so unjust or so vague that it is obvious they would not work at all.

Such being the state of the case, we should not hastily assent to certain sweeping charges often made by Socialists against the system under which we are living, and under which society will probably long require to continue. I shall only glance at two of these charges.

In the present state of economic discussion the allegation that the law of wages reduces the majority of labourers to the bare means of subsistence can only be regarded as a sign of ignorance or bias. No competent and impartial economist now fails to recognise that Ricardo's treatment of the law of wages was vitiated by the

omission of important elements which should have been taken into account; and still less is any such economist unaware that Lassalle's exaggeration of Ricardo's conclusion is a gross caricature of the real law, devoid of theoretical justification, and decisively contradicted by the history of wages. The law of wages tends to press us down to bare subsistence no otherwise than water tends to drown us. Water tends to drown us, and will drown us, if we do not keep out of it, or cannot swim, or make no use of ship, boat, or saving apparatus. The law of wages tends to draw us down to bare subsistence, and will draw us to that level if we do not exercise self-restraint and temperance; if we are content to be unintelligent and unskilled in our work; if we do not strive to develop our faculties and improve our condition; if we do not seek the best market for our labour; and if we are in other ways untrue to ourselves. Water, however, notwithstanding its tendency to drown us, drowns not one of us of itself, or apart from our occasional misfortunes, or want of skill, or want of prudence. And equally the law of wages, notwithstanding its tendency towards bare subsistence, drags not one of us down to that of itself, apart from our exceptional ill-luck, or our insufficient intelligence or virtue, or our lack of skill or energy.

To represent wages as a badge of degradation and slavery is another common misrepresentation. Not only the obscure and irresponsible scribblers and the ignorant and reckless mob-orators of the socialist party, but its leading representatives (men like Engels, Marx, and Lassalle, Hyndman, Morris, and Henry George) have employed all the eloquence at their command in dilating on the debasement and enslavement involved in dependence on wages.

It might have easily been put to a better use. If there is such a thing as obligation in the world at all there must be to the same extent such dependence as that which the opponents of the wages-system denounce as slavery. Whoever enters into any kind of engagement or contract ceases to have the freedom of not fulfilling it; but if that suffices to make a slave of him it is not only the labourer for wages, but every man who feels bound to keep a promise, every respectable husband, every worthy citizen, every honourable person, who is a slave. On other foundation than such so-called slavery, no society or social institution can be established or sustained.

And if to serve for wages is debasement and slavery, few indeed of those who have professed to regard it as such have not daily and deliberately consented to their own degradation by accepting what they denounce. In fact, even kings and presidents, prime ministers and lord-chancellors, official and professional persons of all classes, authors of all descriptions, and, in a word, men of all degrees, not merely manual labourers, receive wages under some name or another.

There is nothing servile or degrading in a wages-contract in itself. Wages imply in the very notion of them that the receiver of them is a moral and free being, with a right of property in himself. The slave and serf, as such, cannot be the recipients of wages, but only of the sustenance thought requisite to maintain their efficiency as instruments of labour, or a something more to stimulate their exertions. But neither sustenance itself nor a premium on labour is a wage, precisely because the latter implies that the faculties of him who receives it are his own, and that he is entitled to use them as his own. There is, therefore, in the receiving of wages nothing akin to slavery or serfdom. On the contrary, it is so essentially contrasted to them, so sharply separated from them, that where it is they cannot be, and where they are it cannot be. To earn wages a man must be a free man, must have his faculties at his own disposal, and be entitled to employ them primarily for his own good. There is no more slavery or dishonour in the workman receiving wages than in the capitalist taking profits.

Further, the wages-contract has been assailed as unjust. It is represented by Socialists as always favourable to the employer and unfavourable to the employed. Workmen are asserted to be so weak and masters so strong that the former are never paid a fair day's wages for a fair day's work. The workman, it is affirmed, is entitled to the whole product of his labour, but never receives in the form of wages nearly so much as would enable him to purchase it. But, again, when we seek for proof it is not to be found. The wages-contract is as just as any other form of contract. What more injustice is there in purchasing labour-power than in purchasing commodities at market value? If it is no wrong to a peasant woman to buy from her eggs or butter at their current price, what wrong can there be in buying from her so many hours of work according to the same principle of remuneration?

It is manifestly contrary to fact that the wages-system is always favourable to employers, and unfavourable to the employed. In a multitude of cases it is just the reverse. Its great merit, indeed, is that it ensures that workmen get paid for their labour, although it be economically worthless or even wasteful. Let me illustrate this statement. In the west of Ireland there is to be seen the channel of what was intended to be a canal connecting Loughs Corrib and Mask. It was cut at enormous expense through very porous limestone. When completed the water of Lough Mask was let into it, but, with the perversity ascribed to Irish pigs, it refused to take the course prepared for it, and ran straight towards the centre of the earth. The canal was simply a gigantic and costly blunder. What would the labourers employed have got for their toil if they had been working not for wages but for shares in the product of their labour or in the profits of the enterprise? Again, is it the capitalists who have an eye to profits, or the labourers who have the security of a wages-contract, who benefit by the undertaking of various works which are never completed or which utterly fail? Of enterprises started a vast number are unsuccessful, yet the workmen connected with them get the ordinary wages current in the trade at the time. Many industrial companies pay in the course of a year neither interest nor dividend; but they all pay wages.

Those who assert that workmen are always underpaid should be able to state what would be proper payment. But they have no certain and invariable criterion, rule, or law, enabling them to do so. All the varying conditions of the labour market must be taken into account. When they affirm that the workman is entitled to the whole product of his labour, they should explain what they mean thereby. There is a sense in which they may be right; but it is one which would prove nothing against the justice of the wages-system. The sense, however, in which Socialists wish to get it credited is one which implies that if a working tailor makes a coat in the workshop of, and with the materials supplied by, a master tailor, he is entitled to the whole value of the coat, and should be able to purchase it with the wages which he receives for the labour which he spends on it. That, of course, is sheer absurdity. Even if a tailor is both capitalist and workman, so as at once to pay for every element in the production of a coat

and personally to execute the whole process of its production, he is only entitled to receive for it what a buyer will give him; and if he parts with it to one who sells ready-made clothes, he cannot expect to be able to repurchase it with what he received for it. In a word, it is just as difficult to prove that a workman who receives the wages current in his trade at the time does not receive the whole product of his labour as that he does not obtain a just wage.

I am far from maintaining that the wages-system is a perfect or final system; the best possible system; one which does not require to be supplemented, or which may not in the course of historical development be superseded by a system which will have greater advantages and fewer incidental evils. All that I maintain is that it is wrong to heap on it foolish and false accusations like those to which I have just referred; wrong to strive by unfair means and poisoned weapons to stir up the hatred of large masses of men against a system which obviously secures to them most important advantages, and which must obviously continue to be the system under which they will live, until displaced either by a slow and vast process of moral and social evolution or by a violent and ruinous revolution which would be unspeakably disastrous even to themselves.

Would the compulsory labour-system of Collectivism be any improvement on the voluntary wages-system of Capitalism? It is sufficient, I think, to quote in answer a few words of truth and soberness uttered by Schäffle: "Democratic Collectivism promises the abolition of the wage-system and of all private service which involves the continuous enslavement of the proletariat. 'Wage-slavery' is to be superseded by a system of universal service directly for the community: the whole of productive labour would be placed in the position of a paid official department of the Democratic Republic. There is no doubt that private service is in principle very irksome and oppressive to workmen of high self-respect and personal superiority. But it has not been proved that for the great mass of existing wage-labourers the position of private service could not be made tolerable by some other means, nor has it been demonstrated that the *élite* of the working classes cannot find within the limits of the capitalistic sphere of industry leading positions which are also suited to satisfy a high sense of self-respect. It is certain, on the other hand, that there is no

possible organisation of society in which no one must obey, and every one can rule, or in which all ruling would be mere idle pleasure and satisfaction. In the existing order of society the mass of officials who make up the administration, both central and local, although they have the great advantages of immediate and uninterrupted self-supporting labour, have it at the price of very strict obedience towards often the most insignificant and spiteful nominees of favouritism, and in the face of very great uncertainty as to impartial and fair advancement on the ladder of promotion. The freedom of the individual would lose in a degree which democracy would by no means tolerate. Popular government very easily degenerates into mob-rule, and this is always more favourable to the common and the insignificant than to the noble and distinguished. Hence Democratic Collectivism itself would be likely to wound in a high degree the most sensitive self-respect, without leaving as much freedom as does the present system of private service, in the choice of employment and employer, or of a place of abode. Its only equality would be that no one was in any wise independent, but all slaves of the majority, and on this point again Democratic Collectivism would come to grief, and utterly fail to keep the promises it makes to the better class of working men, whose self-respect is injured by the existing state of things."*

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

Marxian Doctrine of Labour

Collectivist Socialism rests on economic doctrines propounded by Rodbertus and Marx. By designating these doctrines "new" (p. 30) I am not to be understood as attributing to them any other novelty than that of development and of application. They were mainly exaggerations of, or inferences from, doctrines of earlier economists; they were certainly not "new" *economic truths*. Neither Rodbertus nor Marx was successful in discovering such truths. They were both, however, learned, laborious, and able students of economic science;* and, by their critical acumen, their dialectic vigour, and their ingenuity, they have, at least indirectly, greatly contributed to its progress. The views of the former on the distribution of wealth, and of the latter on the evolution of capitalist production, were of a kind admirably calculated to stimulate to fruitful economic investigation.

I can here only touch briefly on the chief features of Marx's teaching

* "The Impossibility of Social Democracy," pp. 94-6.

as to labour. That teaching was drawn mainly from English economists—Locke, Adam Smith, Ricardo, Bray, Thompson, Hall, etc. Without Ricardo there would have been no Marx. The essential content of the Marxian economics is the Ricardian economics. Marx received Ricardo's exposition of economics as generally correct, narrowed still further what was already too narrow in it, exaggerated what was excessive, and made applications of it which Ricardo had not foreseen.

Sismondi, the Saint-Simonians, and Proudhon were his precursors among French economists. His criticism of Capitalism owes, of course, a good deal to Fourier. His whole system presupposes the truth of the idea that there is a radical class distinction, an essential social antimony within the present industrial regime, between *bourgeoisie* and *prolétariat*, or *peuple*. That idea was gradually evolved and popularised in France between 1830 and 1848 by various *littérateurs* of whom Louis Blanc was the most influential.

As regards the spirit of Marx's teaching, it was the spirit of the generation to which he belonged; the irreverent and revolutionary spirit of what was once known as Young Germany; the spirit of a race of disillusionised men, without belief in God or unsensuous good; a hypercritical, cynical, and often scurrilous spirit. In passing into its latest or German stage Socialism gained intellectually but lost morally. Under the manipulation of Marx and Lassalle and their successors the spirit of justice and of humanity which characterised it as presented by French Socialists from Saint-Simon to Louis Blanc was expelled from it, and it is now everywhere a morally inferior thing to what it was in its earlier phases.

A fundamental part of the teaching of Marx is his theory of social development. The general thesis in which the theory may be summed up is stated by his friend Engels, thus: "The materialist conception of history starts from the proposition that the production of the means to support human life, and, next to production, the exchange of things produced, is the basis of all social structure; that in every society that has appeared in history, the manner in which wealth is distributed and society divided into classes or orders is dependent upon what is produced, how it is produced, and how the products are exchanged. From this point of view the final causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in men's brains, not in man's better insight into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange. They are to be sought, not in the *philosophy*, but in the *economics* of each particular epoch. The growing perception that existing social institutions are unreasonable and unjust, that reason has become unreason, and right wrong, is only proof that in the modes of production and exchange changes have silently taken place, with which the social order, adapted to earlier economic conditions, is no longer in keeping. From this it also follows that the

means of getting rid of the incongruities that have been brought to light must also be present, in a more or less developed condition, within the changed modes of production themselves. These means are not to be invented by deduction from fundamental principles, but are to be discovered in the stubborn facts of the existing system of production."*

What is true in this theory is that the economic factors of history have at all times had a great influence on the general development of history; and that in all stages of the movement of human society there have been a correspondence and congruity between the character and organisation of industry and the character and organisation of law, politics, science, art, and religion. It is a very important truth, but not a truth which had been left to Marx to discover or even to do justice to. Many authors before him had indicated and illustrated it; and one, especially, Auguste Comte, the founder of Positivism, had exhibited the relations and significance of it with an insight and comprehensiveness to which there is nothing akin in the treatment of it by Marx. Where alone Marx did memorable work as a historical theorist was in his analysis and interpretation of the capitalist era, and there he must be admitted to have rendered eminent service even by those who think his analysis more subtle than accurate, and his interpretation more ingenious than true. When he imagined that history could be completely accounted for by its economic factors—that modes of production and exchange generated hostile classes from whose antagonism and conflicts arose all the changes, institutions, and ideas of society—he greatly deceived himself, and ignored and rejected hosts of facts which testify against so narrow and exclusive a conception. The causes of his thus erring were two: an unproved assumption of the truth of materialism, and a desire to find some sort of philosophical and historical basis for his socialistic agitation. His relationship to Hegel determined the form the error assumed, and the method of its evolution into a philosophy. The historical philosophy of Marx was reached mainly by the rough and ready process of turning Hegel's upside down, and retaining the Hegelian dialectic to so slight an extent that it came to look to Marx as a dialectic of his own "fundamentally different from Hegel's, and even its direct opposite."†

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* "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific," pp. 45-6.

† There is a fairly good account and criticism of the Marxian historical hypothesis in Dr. Paul Barth's "Geschichtsphilosophie Hegel's und der Hegelianer bis auf Marx und Hartmann," 1890. The claim of Socialism to be founded on the theory of development set forth by Darwin and his followers has not been admitted by any biologists of eminence, and has been repudiated even by such resolutely free-thinking evolutionists as Oscar Schmidt and Ernst Häckel. What is presented as science and history in Fr, Engels' "Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigenthums, und des Staats," and Bebel's "Die Frau," is notoriously superficial and uncritical. Some portion

The doctrine of Marx on labour rests on what is generally spoken of as a theory of value but which is properly only a theory of value in exchange or of price. In attempting to establish this theory Marx begins by distinguishing between value in use or utility and value in exchange or simply value, but soon concludes that the former must be abstracted or discarded in the economic estimation of things; that the utility of the goods or commodities which constitute the wealth of societies does not affect their relative values; that labour is the source of all economic value, the cause of all social wealth. He deserves credit for having tried to prove that such is the case. Various eminent economists had preceded him in affirming that labour produced all, or nearly all, value. But none of them had made an effort to prove what they affirmed. Marx is, therefore, not without merit in connection with the proposition in question. His attempt to prove it, however, is at once feeble and sophistical. The following quotation will give an adequate conception of his pretended demonstration:

"The utility of a thing makes it a use-value. But this utility is not a thing of air. Being limited by the physical properties of the commodity, it has no existence apart from that commodity. A commodity, such as iron, corn, or a diamond, is therefore, so far as it is a material thing, a use-value, something useful. This property of a commodity is independent of the amount of labour required to appropriate its useful qualities. When treating of use-value, we always assume to be dealing with definite quantities, such as dozens of watches, yards of linen, or tons of iron. The use-values of commodities furnish the material for a special study, that of the commercial knowledge of commodities. Use-values become a reality only by use or consumption; they also constitute the substance of all wealth, whatever may be the social form of that wealth. In the form of society we are about to consider, they are, in addition, the material depositories of exchange value.

"Exchange value, at first sight, presents itself as a quantitative relation, as the proportion in which values in use of one sort are exchanged for those of another sort, a relation constantly changing with time and place. Hence exchange value appears to be something accidental and purely relative, and consequently an intrinsic value—*i.e.*, an exchange value that is inseparably connected with, inherent in, commodities seems a contradiction in terms. Let us consider the matter a little more closely.

"A given commodity—*e.g.*, a quarter of wheat—is exchanged for *x* blacking, *y* silk, or *z* gold, etc.; in short, for other commodities in the most different proportions. Instead of one exchange value, the wheat has, therefore, a great many. But since *x* blacking, *y* silk, or *z* gold, etc., each represent the exchange value of one quarter of wheat, *x* blacking, *y* silk, *z* gold, etc., must, as exchange values, be replaceable by each other, or equal to each other. Therefore, first, the valid exchange values of a given commodity express something equal; secondly, exchange value, generally, is only the mode of expression, the phenomenal form of something contained in it, yet distinguishable from it.

"Let us take two commodities—*e.g.*, corn and iron. The proportions in which they are exchangeable, whatever those proportions may be, can

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of the evidence for this statement will be found well exhibited in "Die Naturwissenschaft und die Socialdemocratische Theorie," 1894, of H. E. Ziegler, Prof. of Zoology in Freiburg i. B.

always be represented by an equation in which a given quantity of corn is equated to some quantity of iron—*e.g.*, 1 quarter corn = *x* cwt. iron. What does this equation tell us? It tells us that in two different things—in 1 quarter of corn and in *x* cwt. of iron—there exists in equal quantities something common to both. The two things must therefore be equal to a third, which in itself is neither the one nor the other. Each of them, so far as it is exchange value, must therefore be reducible to this third.

"A simple geometrical illustration will make this clear. In order to calculate and compare the areas of rectilinear figures, we decompose them into triangles. But the area of the triangle itself is expressed by something totally different from its visible figure—namely, by half the product of the base into the altitude. In the same way the exchange values of commodities must be capable of being expressed in terms of something common to them all, of which thing they represent a greater or less quantity.

"This common 'something' cannot be either a geometrical, a chemical, or any other natural property of commodities. Such properties claim our attention only in so far as they affect the utility of those commodities, make them use-values. But the exchange of commodities is evidently an act characterised by a total abstraction from use-values. Then one use-value is just as good as another, provided only it be present in sufficient quantity. Or, as old Barbon says, 'one sort of wares are as good as another, if the values be equal. There is no difference or distinction in things of equal value. . . . . An hundred pounds' worth of lead or iron is of as great value as one hundred pounds' worth of silver or gold.' As use-values commodities are, above all, of different qualities, but as exchange-values they are merely different quantities, and consequently do not contain an atom of use-value.

"If, then, we leave out of consideration the use-value of commodities they have only one common property left, that of being products of labour. But even the product of labour itself has undergone a change in our hands. If we make abstraction from its use-value, we make abstraction at the same time from the material elements and shapes that make the product a use-value; we see in it no longer a table, a house, yarn, or any other useful thing. Its existence as a material thing is put out of sight. Neither can it any longer be regarded as the product of the labour of the joiner, the mason, the spinner, or of any other definite kind of productive labour. Along with the useful qualities of the products themselves, we put out of sight both the useful character of the various kinds of labour embodied in them, and the concrete forms of that labour; there is nothing left but what is common to them all; all are reduced to one and the same sort of labour, human labour in the abstract.

"Let us now consider the residue of each of these products; it consists of the same unsubstantial reality in each, a mere congelation of homogeneous human labour, of labour-power expended without regard to the mode of its expenditure. All that these things now tell us is, that human labour-power is embodied in them. When looked at as crystals of this social substance, common to them all, they are—Values.

"We have seen that when commodities are exchanged, their exchange value manifests itself as something totally independent of their use-value. But if we abstract from their use-value there remains their Value as defined above. Therefore, the common substance that manifests itself in the exchange value of commodities, whenever they are exchanged, is their value."*

Such is the argument. Obviously it begins with the assumption of a developed system of exchange, an organised trade with common weights and measures, cwts., quarters, etc., and a host of exact and

* "Capital," vol. i., pp. 2-5.

invariable equations of value recognised as existing between exchangeable objects. The assumption is unfair, and we can never hope to understand the nature of exchange if we examine it only at such a point. What we must commence by looking at is exchange in its roots and rudiments, the rudest and most elementary exchanges, those of the kind out of which all others must have grown. The simplest conceivable exchanges, such as necessarily take place between mere savages, presuppose no equations, no definite measures of weight or capacity, no common standard of value. What is really implied when two individuals in what may be called the state of nature (meaning thereby one without culture or inventions) exchange, in the economic sense of the term, any two objects? Merely that each of these two individuals, considering the two objects from the point of view of his own present and prospective advantage, regards what he gets as *more desirable, more useful*, than what he gives; in other words, that each of these individuals forms two different judgments or estimates of the *value* of these objects. Such judgments or estimates are obviously founded only on a comparison of the use-values of the objects to the individuals who exchange them. Such judgments are all that is necessarily implied in the simplest economic exchanges; and they can never be eliminated from the most developed and complicated processes of exchange, although these processes widen the distance between the final use-values, make their influence less conspicuous, and render it easier for a fallacious reasoner to pretend that they have none.

Marx not only takes up the consideration of exchange value at a wrong stage, but also unwarrantably assumes that at that stage it remains unaltered, so that a quarter of grain not only is equivalent at a given moment but continues to be permanently equivalent to, constantly to equate, the same definite amounts of all other things. This assumption is utterly inconsistent with facts. The relative values of objects are incessantly changing. This of itself indicates that their values cannot be dependent on "a constant," on what is unchanging with respect to them all, equal to them all; in other words, it shows that "an intrinsic value in exchange," not merely *seems to be* but *is* "a contradiction in terms," a chimera which science and common sense must repudiate.

Marx proceeds with his argument at a very rapid pace; indeed in reckless haste. There is, he next tells us, a common "something" in commodities without which, whatever utility they might have, they would have no value; and that this "something" cannot be any property affecting their utility, inasmuch as "the exchange of commodities is evidently an act characterised by a total abstraction from use-value." We have a right to insist on this *evidently* being proved; we have a right to refuse to accept either the mere assertion of Marx or a few irrelevant words from "old Barbon" in lieu of proof. That

the desirability of commodities can ever be legitimately abstracted in the determination of their values is plainly in the utmost need of proof, and most unlikely to receive it. Without the former, use-value, there would be not an atom of the latter, exchange-value, and therefore to speak of the "total abstraction" of the former in exchange is absurd. To take no account of the degrees of desirability of commodities, and of the qualities and circumstances on which they depend, and in relation to which they vary, is to make all explanation of their values impossible. The resolution of Marx to "leave out of consideration the use-value of commodities," without any justification of the doing so, was very convenient but quite illegitimate.

He carries it into effect: and then he has only to draw an inference, and lo! the whole world of commodities which compose the wealth of societies is transformed as by the touch of a magic wand, so at least we are asked to believe, not indeed into a fairy scene, but into a fitting paradise for a German metaphysician, one filled with characterless and undifferentiated objects; with things which have no elements or qualities, bodies or shapes; with "products of human labour in the abstract;" with "crystals of the universal social substance, values." What rubbish! What poor dialectic jugglery! And *that* is what Socialists take for invincible logic.

In reality, notwithstanding the wave of the prestigiatory wand, the world of commodities, the realm of values remains unaffected. Among its contents there are not merely products of labour but also products of nature. Its objects have not exclusively the one property of having been originated by human exertion. They are equally objects of human desire in various degrees, objects of demand and supply, objects relatively rare or abundant. The mere "crystals" and "congelations" of homogeneous human labour into which Marx would resolve them are the creations of an abstraction and imagination unguided by reason and regardless of facts.

So much for the doctrine of Marx as to the cause or principle of value. His doctrine as to the measure of value naturally follows from it. He states it thus:

"A use-value, or useful article, has value only because human labour in the abstract has been embodied or materialised in it. How, then, is the magnitude of this value to be measured? Plainly, by the quantity of the value-creating substance, the labour, contained in the article. The quantity of labour, however, is measured by its duration, and labour-time in its turn finds its standard in weeks, days, and hours.

"Some people might think that if the value of a commodity is determined by the quantity of labour spent on it, the more idle and unskilful the labourer, the more valuable would his commodity be, because more time would be required in its production. The labour, however, that forms the substance of value is homogeneous human labour, expenditure of one uniform labour-power. The total labour-power of society, which is embodied in the sum total of the values of all commodities produced by that society, counts here as one

homogeneous mass of human labour-power, composed though it be of innumerable individual units. Each of these units is the same as any other, so far as it has the character of the average labour-power of society, and takes effect as such; that is, so far as it requires for producing a commodity no more time than is needful on an average, no more than is socially necessary. The labour-time socially necessary is that required to produce an article under the normal conditions of production, and with the average degree of skill and intensity prevalent at the time. The introduction of power-looms into England probably reduced by one-half the labour required to weave a given quantity of yarn into cloth. The hand-loom weavers, as a matter of fact, continued to require the same time as before; but for all that, the product of one hour of their labour represented after a change only half an hour's social labour, and consequently fell to one-half its former value.

"We see, then, that what determines the magnitude of the value of any article is the amount of labour socially necessary, or the labour-time socially necessary for its production. Each individual commodity, in this connection, is to be considered as an average sample of its class. Commodities, therefore, in which equal quantities of labour are embodied, or which can be produced in the same time, have the same value. The value of one commodity is to the value of any other, as the labour-time necessary for the production of the one is to that necessary for the production of the other. As values, all commodities are only definite masses of congealed labour-time."*

The validity of what Marx thus maintains is obviously and entirely dependent on the conclusiveness of the argument which we have already shown to be worthless. Had he made out labour to be the sole principle, the common and only substance, of value, we could not have reasonably refused to admit amount or quantity of labour to be the only and the adequate measure of the magnitude and proportions of value. But as he has completely failed to prove labour the source of value, he has left his doctrine that it is the measure of value, hanging in the air, without any basis or support.

This is very unfortunate for it, especially as there is not only no natural probability in its favour, but intrinsic unreasonableness is plainly stamped upon it. Labour itself varies in value with the fluctuations of demand and supply. An hour of common manual toil may be worth a few pence per working day in India, a shilling in Ireland, three or four shillings in England, and six or seven shillings in certain districts of the United States. In all trades the value of labour is liable to rise and fall from one short period to another, sometimes from week to week, or even from day to day. And there are unfortunately times and places where it has no value, or almost no value at all. It varies from the action and interaction of a great number of causes and circumstances, many of which may be in themselves independent and unconnected. How can what thus varies be an unvarying measure? How can its duration be the sole, common, and exact measure of the magnitudes of all values? In fact, to pretend to have proved that it is so is as absurd as to claim to have discovered

* "Capital," vol. i., pp. 5-6.

the philosopher's stone, or to have invented a machine with the property of perpetual motion.

To say that the same quantity or duration of labour always implies the same exertion, trouble, or sacrifice on the part of the labourers, and is therefore to be regarded as always of the same value, is a quite futile attempt at defence of the Marxian position. For, in the first place what is alleged is not correct. Men differ amazingly as regards both their natural and their acquired powers of labour, and consequently as regards the quantity and the quality of what they can produce in a given time, and as regards the value of their labour in that time. In the second place, it has, fortunately for the welfare of mankind, not been exclusively left to labourers to determine the value of labour, to producers to assign what prices they please to their products, to sellers to impose their own terms on buyers; they must conform to what employers of labour, consumers of commodities, and buyers are able and willing to give. The state of the market, the relation of supply and demand, cannot be disregarded. Economic law cannot be set aside by arbitrary will, nor can it be made to operate only in the interest of one set of persons. It is neither capricious nor partial.

Labour has an influence on value. The labour expended in the production of commodities must be remunerated or it will not continue to be given, and the remuneration is a part of the cost of production which must be returned in the value of the products. Nothing which does not repay the cost of production will be permanently produced. But cost of production does not alone determine the value of products; and labour alone is not the only element of cost of production. The crops reaped by the farmer, the articles made by the manufacturer, must repay, not merely their expenditure in wages but also in rent, machinery, materials, and all other drains on capital.

Marx ignores the influence of rent and capital on value. He reasons as if they had no existence; as if Socialism were already established, and had successfully abolished them. As they still undoubtedly exist, however, and undoubtedly affect cost and price, and consequently value, the theory which "abstracts" them, leaves them out of account, and represents labour alone as the measure of value, is plainly one reached by shutting the eyes to relevant but unwelcome facts. And rent and capital are facts which Socialism, even if established, could neither abolish nor prevent influencing value. The rent of land is just what is paid for its productive advantages; and agriculturists would be an intolerably favoured class in the community, if, under Collectivism, they did not continue to pay for these advantages. They would pay, indeed, to the State instead of to private landlords; but they would equally have to pay, and the new arrangements would as likely be disadvantageous to them as the reverse. Were the capital invested in manufacturing industries collectivised that capital *would not*, unless

the collectivist State were bent on committing suicide, be handed over specially to the workmen in these industries; nor would the profits thereof be added to *their* wages; while the expenditure and consumption of it necessary to production *would* require to be returned out of the products, however much wages might have to be diminished in consequence.

When labour enters largely, in comparison with other factors, into the production of commodities for which there is a steady demand it will have a relatively decisive influence on their value. When there is no monopoly, no need for expensive machinery, and an abundant supply of cheap materials on which to operate, wages may be far the largest item in the cost of production, and the labour expended on commodities may nearly measure their value. But labour alone never really measures value, never being alone in determining the cost of production, and cost of production itself never alone determining the value of products. Labour itself must be supported with capital, requires tools, and cannot dispense with materials seldom, if ever, procurable for absolutely nothing. And, above all, value is not an absolute objective thing, a metaphysical substance, a *Ding-an-sich*, as Marx, with his sham science, virtually represents it to be, but an essentially variable, and, in the main, subjective relation, the relation between the wants of human beings and the objects fitted to supply these wants.

Marx falls into a still less excusable error. He was so engrossed with the desire to prove that the labour which he regards as the substance of value is "homogeneous human labour, expenditure of one uniform labour-power," that he could see no labour constitutive or originative of value except manual labour. He overlooks what scientific knowledge, what inventive genius, what commercial talent and enterprise, what powers of business management and organisation, have done for industry; he attributes to them no merits, allows them no rights to remuneration for what they have done, concedes to them no atom of claim to the possession of what they have produced. Not seeing how to measure the value of headwork by its duration, he chose not to see that it had any, and so was able to reason *as if hands alone had value and could dispense with heads.*

He could not, however, overlook the distinction between skilled and unskilled manual labour, that being obvious even to the bodily eye. What does he make of it? How does he explain such a fact as that while a hodman is paid, perhaps, four shillings for a day's work, a sculptor for the work of an equal day will be paid, say, four pounds? He gets over the difficulty as quickly as he can thus:—"Skilled labour counts only as simple labour intensified, or rather, as multiplied simple labour, a given quantity of skilled labour being considered equal to a greater quantity of simple labour. Experience shows that this

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reduction is constantly being made. A commodity may be the product of the most skilled labour, but its value, by equating it to the product of simple unskilled labour, represents a definite quantity of the latter labour alone. The different proportions in which different sorts of labour are reduced to unskilled labour as their standard, are established by a social process that goes on behind the backs of the producers, and, consequently, appear to be fixed by custom. For simplicity's sake we shall henceforth account every kind of labour to be unskilled, simple labour."*

This is a very curious answer. The question to which it should be a response is one not about "counting" or "considering" or what is "constantly being done;" but about what is, and what is implied in Marx's doctrine that duration of labour is the measure of value. Our sculptor gets for one day's work twenty times as much as our hodman gets for the same length of labour, and labour as intense and much less pleasant. How does this happen if duration of labour be the measure of value? "O!" replies Marx, "I am willing to reckon the sculptor's day equal to twenty days of the hodman." But that is no answer. What alone would be an answer would be to show us that one day of the sculptor really is equal in duration to twenty days of the hodman. And when that is done it will be further necessary to show, how, if one day of labour may be twenty days of labour, or indeed any number of days, a day can have any definite duration, or the labour done in it any definite value; in a word, how duration of labour can have the characters of a measure at all.

Further, Marx takes "simple average labour," "simple unskilled labour," as his basis of reckoning and reasoning. He abstracts or disregards all that individualises and differentiates men as labourers or producers. He represents "average" as exchanged against "average," one hour's work of one man as in the abstract equivalent to one hour's work of another man, even although he is forced to reckon it as sometimes equivalent to twenty or even more hours' work of certain men. Surely this is exceedingly unreal and unreasonable. Is not all, or nearly all, economic labour simply *more or less unskilled*, and most of it that we call unskilled very far from really so? The "average" quantity of individual labour performed in a community may be a quantity which not one individual of the community exactly accomplishes. Every man of them may produce either more or less than the average so that there may be no average to exchange. In a given time almost any one individual produces more and another less than a special average, and hence cannot exchange on the footing of such an average without the one suffering an unfair loss and the other gaining an unfair advantage. Marx, in a word, has rested his theory

* "Capital," pp. 11-12.

not on reality, but on a fictitious abstraction. His units of measurement and calculation are arbitrary and inapplicable. His "simple average labour" is akin to "le moyen homme," "the economic man," and various other pseudo-scientific myths.

I only require to add that the theory of Marx which has been under review receives many contradictions from experience. As we have seen it supplies us with no measure for the economic appreciation of inventive mechanical genius, industrial and commercial enterprise, or talent for business management. Nor does it account for the value of specially skilled and artistic labour; nor for the value of rare, and still less of unique objects; nor for the value of natural advantages, and the spontaneous products of nature; nor for the slight value of abnormally ill-paid labour. But this line of argument has been so often and so conclusively followed up both by the critics of Ricardo and the critics of Rodbertus and Marx that it may suffice merely to refer to it.

Let us now pass to the account which Marx gives of the relation of labour to capital. As regards this portion of his teaching, however, I shall here confine myself to mere exposition, reserving criticism for the supplementary note to the next chapter. Marx conceives of capital in a peculiar way. It is, in his view, not simply wealth which is applied to the production of wealth, but wealth which is applied for the exploitation of labour. It consists of "the means of exploitation," of "the instruments of production which capitalists employ for the exploitation and enslavement of labourers." None of these means and instruments are in themselves capital; they are not capital if personally used by their possessors; they are only capital when so employed as to extract profit, unpaid labour, from those who do not possess them. "Capital is dead labour, which, vampire-like, becomes animated only by sucking living labour, and the more labour it sucks the more it lives."

Capital is further "an historical category," and even a late historical category. "The circulation of commodities is the starting-point of capital. The production of commodities, their circulation, and that more developed form of their circulation called commerce, these form the historical groundwork from which it rises. The modern history of capital dates from the creation in the sixteenth century of a world-embracing commerce and a world-embracing market. If we abstract from the material substance of the circulation of commodities, that is, from the exchange of the various use-values, and consider only the economic forms produced by this process of circulation, we find its final result to be money: this final product of the circulation of commodities is the first form in which capital appears."

The capitalist causes his capital to circulate with a view to obtaining not commodities or use-values but profit, an excess over the value of his capital, surplus-value, *Mehrwerth*. But the process of circulation or exchange, although necessary to the attainment of this end, does

not itself secure it. It is merely a change of form of commodities, which does not, whether equivalents or non-equivalents are exchanged, effect a change in the magnitude of the value. Neither by regularly buying commodities under their value nor by regularly selling them over their value can the capitalist create the surplus-value which is the object of his desire. He can only do so by finding one commodity whose use-value possesses the peculiar faculty of being the source of exchange-value. This he finds in the capacity of labour, or labour-power. It is offered for sale under the two indispensable conditions, first, that its possessors are personally free, so that what they sell is not themselves but only their labour-power, and secondly, that they are destitute of the means of realising this labour-power in products or commodities which they could use or sell for their own advantage, and, consequently, are under the necessity of selling the power itself. This power the capitalist buys, supplies with all that it requires to realise itself, and obtains in return for the price he pays for it all that it produces.

How does he from this source draw surplus-value ? Thus, according to Marx, labour-power, the source of all value, itself possesses a value. What value ? Like all commodities, the value of the social normal labour-time incorporated in it, or necessary to its reproduction ; in this case, the value of the means of subsistence necessary to the maintenance of the labourer. If six hours of average social labour are sufficient to provide the labourer with the physically indispensable means of subsistence, and the value of these means are represented by three shillings, these three shillings correctly represent the value of the labour-power put forth by the labourer during a working-day of six hours. This sum the capitalist gives, and must give, to the labourer. There is, therefore, still no surplus-value. The capitalist has paid away just as much as he has received ; the labourer has put into the product in which his work is incorporated no more than that work has cost.

This, of course, does not satisfy the capitalist. But he sees that the labourer can produce more than he costs : that he can labour twelve hours instead of six, yet maintain himself each day in working efficiency and renew his vital powers on three shillings, the equivalent of the value of six hours. Accordingly he compels the labourer to work for him twelve hours instead of six at the price of six, and appropriates the value created by the labourer during the six extra hours. *Capitalistic profit is simply the surplus-value obtained from unpaid labour.*

As we have now reached the very heart of Marx's doctrine we shall allow him to speak for himself. He writes :

" Let us examine the matter more closely. The value of a day's labour-power amounts to 3*s.*, because on our assumption half a day's labour is embodied in that quantity of labour-power—*i.e.*, because the means of

subsistence that are daily required for the production of labour-power, cost half a day's labour. But the past labour that is embodied in the labour-power, and the living labour that it can call into action; the daily cost of maintaining it, and its daily expenditure in work, are two totally different things. The former determines the exchange-value of the labour-power, the latter is its use-value. The fact that half a day's labour is necessary to keep the labourer alive during twenty-four hours, does not in any way prevent him from working a whole day. Therefore, the value of labour-power, and the value which that labour-power creates in the labour process, are two entirely different magnitudes; and this difference of the two values was what the capitalist had in view, when he was purchasing the labour-power. The useful qualities that labour-power possesses, and by virtue of which it makes yarn or boots, were to him nothing more than a *conditio sine quâ non*; for in order to create value labour must be expended in a useful manner. What really influenced him was the specific use-value which this commodity possesses of being *a source not only of value, but of more value than it has itself.* This is the special service that the capitalist expects from labour-power, and in this transaction he acts in accordance with the 'eternal laws' of the exchange of commodities. The seller of labour-power, like the seller of any other commodity, realises its exchange-value, and parts with its use-value. He cannot take the one without giving the other. The use-value of labour-power, or in other words labour, belongs just as little to its seller as the use-value of oil after it has been sold belongs to the dealer who has sold it. The owner of the money has paid the value of a day's labour-power; his, therefore, is the use of it for a day; a day's labour belongs to him. The circumstance that on the one hand the daily sustenance of labour-power costs only half a day's labour, while, on the other hand, the very same labour-power can work during a whole day, that consequently the value which its use during one day creates is double what he pays for that use is, without doubt, a piece of good luck for the buyer, but by no means an injury to the seller.

"Our capitalist foresaw this state of things. The labourer therefore finds, in the workshop, the means of production necessary for working, not only during six, but during twelve hours. Just as during the six hours' process our 10 lbs. of cotton absorbs six hours' labour, and became 10 lbs. of yarn, so now 20 lbs. of cotton will absorb twelve hours' labour and be changed into 20 lbs. of yarn. Let us now examine the product of this prolonged process. There is now materialised in this 20 lbs. of yarn the labour of five days, of which four days are due to the cotton and the lost steel of the spindle, the remaining day having been absorbed by the cotton during the spinning process. Expressed in gold, the labour of five days is 30*s.* This is, therefore, the price of the 20 lbs. of yarn, giving, as before, eighteen-pence as the price of a pound. But the sum of the value of the commodities that entered into the process amounts to 27*s.* The value of the yarn is 30*s.* Therefore the value of the product is one-ninth greater than the value advanced in its production; 27*s.* having been transformed into 30*s.*; a surplus-value of 3*s.* has been created. The trick has at last succeeded; money has been converted into capital.

"Every condition of the problem is satisfied, while the laws that regulate the exchange of commodities have been in no way violated. Equivalent has been exchanged for equivalent. For the capitalist as buyer paid for each commodity, for the cotton, the spindle, and the labour-power, its full value. He then did what is done by every purchaser of commodities; he consumed their use-value. The consumption of the labour-power, which was also the process of producing commodities, resulted in 20 lbs. of yarn, having a value of 30*s.* The capitalist formerly a buyer, now returns to market as a seller of commodities. He sells his yarn at eighteen-pence a pound, which is its exact value. Yet for all that he withdraws 3*s.* more from circulation than he originally threw into it. This metamorphosis, this conversion

of money into capital, takes place both within the sphere of circulation and also outside it; within the circulation, because conditioned by the purchase of the labour-power in the market; outside the circulation because what is done within it is only a stepping-stone to the production of surplus-value, a process which is entirely confined to the sphere of production. Thus '*tout est pour le mieux dans le meilleur des mondes possibles.*'

"By turning his money into commodities that serve as the material elements of a new product, and as factors in the labour-process, by incorporating living labour with their dead substance, the capitalist at the same time converts value—*i.e.*, past, materialised, and dead labour—into capital, into value big with value, a live monster that is fruitful and multiplies."*

The foregoing extract deserves careful perusal. It may not disclose, as Marx pretends, "the secret" of capitalistic production, but it either explicitly states, or inferentially involves, almost everything essential in the Marxian system.

The latter and most interesting portion of the treatise of Marx on Capital consists of little more than the deduction and illustration of the consequences implied in his doctrine of surplus-value. Of these consequences the chief are the following:

(1) The capitalist constantly and successfully strives to appropriate more and more of the productive power of labour. In this endeavour he finds, in machinery, which is the most powerful means of shortening labour-time, the most powerful instrument for accomplishing his purpose. While he lessens, by its aid, the time in which the labourer can gain what is necessary to maintain him, he, at the same time, increases the length of the labour-day.

"In its blind unrestrainable passion, its were-wolf hunger for surplus-labour, capital oversteps, not only the moral, but even the merely physical maximum bounds of the working day. It usurps the time for growth, development, and healthy maintenance of the body. It steals the time required for the consumption of fresh air and sunlight. It higgles over a meal-time, incorporating it where possible with the process of production itself, so that food is given to the labourer as to a mere means of production, as coal is supplied to the boiler, grease and oil to the machinery. It reduces the sound sleep necessary for the restoration, reparation, refreshment of the bodily powers to just so many hours of torpor as the revival of an organism, absolutely exhausted, renders essential. It is not the normal maintenance of the labour power which is to determine the limits of the working day; it is the greatest possible daily expenditure of labour-power, no matter how diseased, compulsory, and painful it may be, which is to determine the limits of the labourer's period of repose. Capital cares nothing for the length of life of labour-power. All that concerns it is simply and solely the maximum of labour-power that can be rendered fluent in a working day. It attains this end by shortening the extent of the labourer's life, as a greedy farmer snatches increased produce from the soil by robbing it of its fertility."†

(2) When Law interposes and shortens the hours of labour, the capitalist still attains his end by "squeezing out of the workman more labour in a given time by increasing the speed of the machinery, and by

* "Capital," pp. 174-6.
† "Capital," vol. i., p. 250.

giving the workmen more machinery to tend." He substitutes intensified labour for labour of more extensive duration, and so exploits the labourer as successfully as before.

(3) Capital appropriates the supplementary labour-power of women and children.

"In so far as machinery dispenses with muscular power, it becomes a means of employing labourers of slight muscular strength, and those whose bodily development is incomplete, but whose limbs are all the more supple. The labour of women and children was, therefore, the first thing sought for by capitalists who used machinery. That mighty substitute for labour and labourers was forthwith changed into a means for increasing the number of wage-labourers by enrolling, under the direct sway of capital, every member of the workman's family, without distinction of age or sex. Compulsory work for the capitalist usurped the place, not only of the children's play, but also of free labour at home within moderate limits for the support of the family.

"The value of labour-power was determined, not only by the labour-time necessary to maintain the individual adult labourer, but also by that necessary to maintain his family. Machinery, by throwing every member of that family on to the labour market, spreads the value of the man's labour-power over his whole family. It thus depreciates his labour-power. To purchase the labour-power of a family of four workers may, perhaps, cost more than it formerly did to purchase the labour-power of the head of the family, but, in return four days' labour takes the price of one, and their price falls in proportion to the excess of the surplus-labour of four over the surplus-labour of one. In order that the family may live, four people must now not only labour, but expend surplus-labour for the capitalist. Thus we see that machinery, while augmenting the human material that forms the principal object of capitalist exploiting power, at the same time raises the degree of exploitation."*

(4) Capitalist accumulation necessarily leads to a continuous increase of the proletariat. It cannot content itself with the disposable labour-power which the natural increase of population yields, but demands and creates an always enlarging surplus-population in a destitute and dependent condition, *an industrial reserve army* in search of employment.

"The greater the social wealth, the functioning capital, the extent and energy of its growth, and, therefore, also the absolute mass of the proletariat and the productiveness of its labour, the greater is the industrial reserve army. The same causes which develop the expansive power of capital develop also the labour-power at its disposal. The relative mass of the industrial reserve army increases therefore with the potential energy of wealth. But the greater this reserve army in proportion to the active labour army, the greater is the mass of consolidated surplus-population, whose misery is in inverse ratio to its torment of labour. The more extensive, finally, the Lazarus-layers of the working-class, and the industrial reserve-army, the greater is official pauperism. *This is the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation.* . . . . . .

"The folly is now patent of the economic wisdom that preaches to the labourers the accommodation of their number to the requirements of capital. The mechanism of capitalist production and accumulation constantly effects

* "Capital," vol. ii., 391-2.

this adjustment. The first word of this adaptation is the creation of a relative surplus-population, or industrial reserve-army. Its last word is the misery of constantly extending strata of the active army of labour, and the dead weight of pauperism." *

(5) Society tends under the operation of capitalism to inequality of wealth with all its attendant evils. Small and moderate fortunes are being absorbed in large, and these in those which are larger; intermediate distinctions and grades are being effaced and eliminated; riches and luxury are accumulating at one pole, and poverty and misery at the opposite; and the time is approaching when, unless capitalist-accumulation is arrested, there will be only a bloated mammonism confronting a squalid pauperism.

[For further consideration of the subjects treated of in this and the next Chapter, the reader should consult the recent work of Mr. W. H. Mallock, "A Critical Examination of Socialism," chap. 3-6. (Murray), 1908.]

* "Capital," vol. ii., 659-60.

CHAPTER V

SOCIALISM AND CAPITAL

THE teaching of Socialism as to labour having been considered, we must now turn our attention to its doctrine concerning capital.

There is no portion of its teaching to which Socialists themselves attach greater importance. They trace to false views of the functions and rights of capital the chief evils which prevail in modern society. They rest all their hopes of a just social organisation in the future on the belief that they can dispel these false views and substitute for them others which are true. Socialists aim at freeing labour from what they regard as the tyranny of capital, and in order to attain their end they strive to expose and destroy the conceptions of capital which are at present dominant. This they consider, indeed, to be their most obvious and most urgent duty.

What is capital? It is a kind of wealth: wealth which is distinguished from other wealth by the application made of it; wealth which, instead of being devoted to enjoyment, or to the satisfaction of immediate wants and desires, is employed in maintaining labour, and in providing it with materials and instruments for the production of additional wealth. It is, in fact, just that portion or kind of wealth which, from its very nature, cannot but co-operate with labour. There is much wealth spent in such a way that the labouring poor may well be excused if they feel aggrieved when they see how it is expended. There are many wealthy persons among us whom Socialists are as fully entitled to censure as the Hebrew prophets were to denounce the "wicked rich," among their contemporaries. By all means let us condemn the "wicked rich;" but let us be sure that it is the "*wicked* rich," and only the "*wicked* rich," that we condemn.

Now, a capitalist may be wicked, but he is not wicked simply as a capitalist. Viewed merely in the capacity of a capitalist, he is a man who employs his wealth in a way advantageous to labour; who distributes the wealth which he uses as capital among those

who labour. As a consumer of wealth the rich man may easily be an enemy of labour, but as a capitalist he must be its friend; and this whether he wishes to be so or not. For capital attains its end only through co-operation with labour. Separated from labour it is helpless and useless. Hence, however selfish a man may be in character and intention, he cannot employ his wealth as capital without using it to sustain labour, to provide it with materials, to put instruments into its hands, and to secure for it fresh fields of enterprise, new markets, new acquisitions.

It seems manifestly to follow that those who seek the good of labour should desire the increase of capital. It appears indubitable that if the wealthy could be persuaded to use more of their wealth as capital and to spend less of it in the gratification of their appetites and vanities, and if the poor could be induced to form capital as far as their circumstances and means allow, so as to be able to supplement and aid their labour in some measure with capital, the condition of the labouring classes would be improved; and, on the other hand, that to represent capital as the enemy of labour and the cause of poverty, and to discourage and impede its formation, can only tend to their injury. But obvious and certain as this consequence looks, Socialists refuse to acknowledge it. They labour to discredit capital, deny or depreciate its benefits, and urge the adoption of measures which would suppress the motives, or remove the means essential to its preservation and increase.

There are Socialists who charge capital with doing nothing for production; who represent it as being idle, inefficacious, sterile. They say labour does everything and capital nothing; and that, consequently, labour deserves to receive everything and capital is not entitled to receive anything.

Assuredly they are utterly mistaken. Manifestly the assistance given by capital to production is immense. Without its aid the most fertile soil, the most genial climate, the most energetic labour, all combined, will produce but little. By means of the capital which the people of Britain have invested in machinery they can do more work and produce more wealth than all the inhabitants of the earth could do through the mere exertion of their unaided muscles. Surely that portion of capital is not less efficacious than the muscular exertion required to impel and direct it.

Deprived of the capital which is spent as wages, the most skilled workmen, however numerous and however familiar with machinery, are helpless.

Exactly to estimate the efficacy of capital, as distinct from that of the other agents of production, is indeed impossible; and for the very sufficient reason that it never is distinct from them, nor are they independent of it. Nature itself, when no capital is spent upon it, soon becomes incapable of supplying the wants of men, at least if they increase in number and rise above a merely animal stage of existence. The more labour advances in power and skill, the more industrial processes become complex and refined, the more dependent do labour and capital grow on the aid of each other. If the influence of capital then is, as must be admitted, incapable of exact measurement, that is only because it is so vast, so varied in the forms it assumes, so comprehensive and pervasive. It operates not as a separate and distinct factor of production, but in and through all the instruments and agencies of industry, supplying materials, making possible invention and the use of its results, securing extensive and prolonged co-operation, facilitating exchange by providing means of communication often of an exceedingly costly kind, and, in a word, assisting labour in every act and process by which nature is subdued and adapted to the service of humanity.

With every desire to deny or depreciate the influence of capital in production, Socialists have naturally found it very difficult to find reasons for their prejudices against it. Of late, however, some attempts have been made to render plausible the notion that capital is, if not altogether inefficient as a factor in production, at least much less efficient than is ordinarily supposed. All these attempts necessarily take the form of arguments designed to show that the various elements of the cost of production are paid not out of capital accumulated by past savings, but out of the produce which labour itself creates. The conclusion sought to be proved carries absurdity so plainly on the face of it that there is no wonder that most of these attempts dropped almost instantaneously into oblivion.*

* The eminent American economist, Prof. Francis A. Walker, contends that "although wages are, to a very considerable degree, in all communities, *advanced* out of capital, and this from the very necessity of the case," yet

The only one, indeed, which has succeeded in attracting general attention is that of Mr. Henry George. He, of course, had too much ability and good sense to agree with those fanatical Socialists who are hostile to capital itself, or who venture to maintain that it does nothing for labour while labour does everything for it. For example, he did not even apply to capital, in the form of machinery, the same reasoning which he did to capital in the form of wages. He did not maintain either that machinery is useless in production, or that the wealth spent in producing it was wealth which the machinery itself had to generate. But he tried to prove that the wealth spent in wages had been produced by the very labour for which it is paid. Each labourer, he held, makes the fund from which his wages are drawn, and makes it not only without deducting anything from his employer's capital, but even while increasing it.

Mr. George brought forward, in proof of his hypothesis, a number of instances, which are ingeniously and interestingly presented, but which supply no real evidence. He started with the assumption of a naked man thrown on an uninhabited island, and supporting himself by gathering birds' eggs, or picking berries. The eggs or berries which this man obtains were, he said, "his wages," and were not drawn from capital, for "there is no capital in the case." But manifestly these eggs or berries are not wages. There can be no wages where there is only one man; where there is no *quid pro quo* between one person and another; where there is neither employer nor employed.

Mr. George proceeded to imagine a man hiring another to gather eggs or berries for him, the payment being a portion of the eggs

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that they "must in any philosophical view of the subject be regarded as *paid* out of the product of current industry." While accepting all the facts on which this opinion is founded, I think a correct interpretation of them would show that the "philosophical view" of wages is that which regards them as *paid* or *payable* out of *capital*. Profit on capitalised labour or interest on credit given by labourers to their employers ought not, it seems to me, to be regarded as strictly wages. Of course, capitalists always expect to be *repaid* out of the product of labour, and are always influenced by their expectations as to the amount and value of the product in determining the rate of wages which they will consent to give. The view of Prof. Walker as to the source of wages is not to be confounded with that of Henry George, its exaggeration and caricature, as set forth in "Progress and Poverty." The inferences which he draws from it are in no degree either revolutionary or socialistic. His treatise on "The Wages Question" is one of the ablest on the subject. Ch. viii. is the portion of it specially referred to in this note.

or berries gathered. In this case, too, he said, there are wages, and they are drawn from the produce of labour, not at all from capital. But was there ever such a case? Would any sane person who was not in some way dependent on another take only a portion of the eggs or berries he collected when he might have and ought to have the whole? When a man who collects eggs or berries engages to take only a portion of them for his trouble and to give up the remainder to another man, it must be because he recognises that that man is entitled to have a share in the eggs or berries in virtue of some right of property in them; or because he has done him some service which makes him his debtor; or has already given him wages in some other form than eggs or berries, but for which eggs or berries will be accepted as an equivalent.

Mr. George's hypothesis finds, then, no support or exemplification even in the simplest and most primitive applications of labour. It fails far more, of course, to apply to ordinary agricultural and manufacturing industry, when labour has to be expended weeks, months, or even years perhaps, in advance, requires to be provided not merely with a basket but with costly instruments and materials, and is seldom occupied with what can be eaten almost or altogether raw. The ingenuity which would persuade us that the wages of the workmen who built the Pyramids, or tunnelled St. Gothard, or cut the Suez Canal, or cast the cannons of Herr Krupp, were paid out of the pyramids, the tunnel, the canal, and the cannons, must be wasted.

It must be added that if the wages of labour were no deduction from capital, while labour only generated and increased capital, it becomes most mysterious that capitalists should ever lose their capital. Yet it is a fact of daily occurrence. And if any man inclined to approve of Mr. George's hypothesis will only attempt to act on it, he will soon find out to his cost how easily the fact may occur, and how incorrect the hypothesis is. Whoever tries to establish and carry on business without capital for the payment of wages will speedily discover that he has made a serious mistake. The hypothesis that such capital is unnecessary will not stand the test of practice.

Capital is charged with a worse fault than indolence. It is denounced as not only a sluggard but a thief. It is said to be born in theft and kept alive only by incessant theft; to be all stolen from

labour, and to grow only by constantly stealing from it. This is the thesis on the proof of which Karl Marx concentrated his energies in his treatise on "Capital." By the acceptance of some unguarded statements of Adam Smith, by misconceptions of Ricardo's meaning, by sophisms borrowed from the copious store of Proudhon, by erroneous definitions of value and price, by excluding utility from or including it in his estimate of value just as it suited his purpose, by unwarranted assumptions regarding the functions of labour, and by numerous verbal and logical juggleries, he elaborated a pretended demonstration. To expound it in detail would take a chapter to itself, and a general refutation of it would require at least another, but to indicate its essential features and fundamental defects need not detain us long, and may suffice for our present purpose. So far as I am aware it has imposed upon few who knew sufficiently the elementary truths of economic science. The greater number of those who have accepted its conclusion have, owing to their ignorance of economics, necessarily received it merely or chiefly on authority.

Marx regards capital not as a natural and universal factor of production, but as a temporary fact, or what he calls an "historical category," which has had an historical, and even late origin. That origin was, according to his view, violence and fraud, or in a single word, spoliation. The mass of capital at present in existence he traces back to conquest, the expropriation of the feudal peasantry from the soil, the suppression of the monasteries, the confiscation of Church lands, enclosures, legislation unfavourable to the working classes, and other like causes. In this part of Marx's doctrine there is nothing original or specially important. That wealth has been obtained by the illegitimate means he describes is indubitable. That it was created by them is very doubtful. It must have existed before it could be stolen; mere theft is not creative either of wealth or capital. The great mass of extant capital has not been inherited from so remote a past as the close of the feudal system and the Reformation, but is of very recent origin. The great majority of contemporary capitalists are not the descendants of feudal lords or of the appropriators of the wealth of the Roman Catholic Church, but are the sons, grandsons, or great grandsons of poor men. Probably a larger proportion of the wealth of Britain than that of any other country may be traced to the sources

described by Marx, but even it must be only a small proportion. The bulk of British wealth has had its source within the capitalist system itself, and is not, directly at least, inherited plunder. Still more, of course, does this hold good of American and Australian wealth.

But here Marx meets us with the cardinal article of his economic creed—the continuous capitalistic appropriation of surplus value. The profits of capital are represented by him as of their very nature robbery. They are only obtained by the abstraction of what is due to labour. The capitalist and the labourer make a bargain, the latter consenting to accept as wages, instead of the full value of what he produces, only, perhaps, a half or a third, or a quarter of it, and, in fact, only the equivalent of what will keep him and his family alive, while the former pockets the remainder, lives in luxury, and continuously accumulates capital. "Capital, therefore is, not only, as Adam Smith says, the command over labour. It is essentially the command over unpaid labour. All surplus-value, whatever particular form (profit, interest, or rent) it may subsequently crystallise into, is in substance the materialisation of unpaid labour. The secret of the self-expansion of capital resolves itself into having the disposal of a definite quantity of other people's unpaid labour."

If this doctrine is correct all capitalists are thieves; and Marx often energetically denounces them as such. In one of the prefaces to his chief work, however, he has tempered his reproaches by the statement that as he considers economic evolution to be simply "a process of natural history," he does not hold capitalists to be individually responsible, but merely regards them as "the personification of economic categories, the embodiments of class-interests and class-relations." This only amounts to saying that although capitalists do live by theft, we must in condemning them remember that they are not moral agents. Schäffle attempts to improve on it by arguing that although the capitalist must be *objectively* a thief, he may be *subjectively* a most respectable man; and that although he lives by stealing, he is not even to be expected to cease from stealing to the utmost of his power, because "if he did not abstract as much as possible from the earnings of the workmen, and increase his own wealth indefinitely, he would fall out of the running." It is a pity that after so remarkable an application of the terms "objective" and "subjective," Dr. Schäffle

should not have succeeded in reaching a more plausible conclusion than that capitalists are to be excused for stealing because they could not otherwise get the plunder. Might not all the thieves in prison be declared *subjectively* honest on the same ground? If the doctrine of Marx as to capital is correct; if the profit of capital is entirely the result of the exploitation of labour; if capitalism is a system of robbery: there is no need of any apology for calling capitalists thieves; and no possible justification of any man who knows what capital is living on its gains. All who live on profits, rents, or interests are thieves if Marx's doctrine is true; and they are consciously thieves if they believe it to be true.

It is to be hoped that most of them can plead that they do not believe it to be true. For this opinion there are many strong reasons. As I indicated in the previous chapter the notion that all value is derived from labour is erroneous. But on this error Marx's whole hypothesis of surplus-value and of the iniquity of the accumulation of capital rests. Another support of his hypothesis is the notion that the true standard of value is to be found in normal labour-time. But this is a gross absurdity, justified by no facts, and defended only by sophisms. A third conception essential to the hypothesis is that profit arises only from the part of capital expended in the payment of wages. It requires us to believe that it is of no consequence to the capitalist what he requires to pay for raw materials, buildings, and machinery, as he can neither gain nor lose on these things, but only on what he spends in wages. But surely a man who believes so extraordinary a dogma must have much more regard for his own fancies than for the actual experience of other men.

Again, Marx's doctrine of the production of relative surplus-value necessarily implies that as capital grows strong labour grows weak; that as the wealth of the capitalist accumulates the poverty of the labourer increases. Almost all modern Socialists have come to the same conclusion. Marx believes himself to have demonstrated it. The direct aim of his entire criticism of capital, and especially of that analysis of the formation of surplus-value which is what is most distinctive and famous in his treatise, is to establish the result which he himself states in the following vigorous terms:—

"Within the capitalist system all methods for raising the social productiveness of labour are brought about at the cost of the

individual labourer; all means for the development of production transform themselves into means of domination over, and exploitation of, the producers; they mutilate the labourer into fragments of a man, degrade him to the level of an appendage of a machine, destroy every remnant of charm in his work, and turn it into a hated toil; they estrange from him the intellectual potentialities of the labour-process in the same proportion as science is incorporated in it as an independent power; they distort the conditions under which he works, subject him during the labour-process to a despotism the more hateful for its meanness; they transform his life-time into working-time, and drag his wife and child beneath the wheels of the Juggernaut of capital. . . . . The law, finally, that always equilibrates the relative surplus population, or industrial reserve army, to the extent and energy of accumulation; this law rivets the labourer to capital more firmly than the wedges of Vulcan did Prometheus to the rock. It establishes an accumulation of misery corresponding with the accumulation of capital. Accumulation of wealth at one pole is, therefore, at the same time accumulation of misery, agony of toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality, mental degradation, at the opposite pole."*

The theory which necessitates such a conclusion must be false, for the conclusion itself is certainly false. The evils, indeed, incidental to, and inherent in, the existing economic condition of society must be admitted to be numerous and serious. There is no sufficient warrant for any optimistic view either of the present or of the future of industry. But such sheer pessimism as that of Marx is thoroughly baseless and irrational. It insists that within the capitalist system, and in the measure that the wealth of capitalists increases, the labouring classes must become continually poorer, more dependent, more ignorant, more degraded in intellect and character. Yet within this very system, and while wealth has been accumulating with extraordinary rapidity, the working classes have obtained the political right formerly denied to them; democracy has proved irresistible; knowledge and the desire for knowledge have penetrated to the lowest strata of society; crime relatively to population has decreased; wages have remarkably risen; commodities have generally fallen in price; and material comfort has become much

* "Capital," pp. 660-1.

more common. Statistical investigations leave it, perhaps, undecided whether during the last half-century wages have increased relatively to the gains of capital; but they make it certain that they have increased absolutely; and that the rise of real wages has been even greater than that of nominal wages. They show that there has been a remarkable levelling up of wages; and even that the wages of the more poorly paid occupations have increased proportionally much more than those of the better paid.* The doctrine of Marx, generally accepted by Socialists, that the increase of production and the accumulation of capital necessarily tend to the disadvantage, slavery, and misery of the operative classes, is thus clearly inconsistent with history, and is decisively contradicted by science truly so called.

The claims of the capitalist to remuneration for what he contributes to production can no more reasonably be contested than those of the labourer for the recompense of his toil; yet Socialism insists on contesting them. Capital is a portion of the capitalist's wealth, and may be any portion of it; hence, if wealth can be honestly possessed at all, capital also may be honestly possessed. But if the wealth which a man uses as capital is really his own we must have very much stronger reasons for denying him the right to benefit by it than any which Socialists have yet brought forward.

His capital is such portion of a man's wealth as he withholds from consumption and devotes to production. It is impossible both "to eat one's cake and to keep it;" both to consume wealth in the present and to retain it as capital with a view to profit in the future. That abstention from consumption, or as economists call it, abstinence, is a necessary condition of the formation, or an essential moment or element in the notion of capital is evident; but hardly more so than that the man who thus abstains is entitled to the use and benefit of the wealth thus retained, of the capital thus formed. The ordinary reader may be inclined to pronounce this certainly very simple truth a truism or a platitude; but Socialists, from Lassalle and Marx to the writers of Fabian Essays, have been able to see in it a paradox, and have made themselves merry

* Abundant confirmation of the three immediately preceding sentences will be found in Giffen's "Progress of the Working Classes;" Atkinson's "Distribution of Profits;" and especially in P. Leroy-Beaulieu's great work, "Essai sur la Répartition des Richesses."

over the notion of the sacrifices and privations of a Rothschild or a Vanderbilt as capitalists. What is alone ludicrous, however, is that professed teachers and reformers of economic science should show such a portentous ignorance of the ordinary and proper signification of so simple and familiar an economic term. It may be easier for a millionaire to capitalise £100,000 than for a poor man to capitalise sixpence, but the one can no more than the other capitalise a farthing of the wealth which he consumes, and the rich man and the poor have clearly an equal and a perfect right to profit by their capital, both because what they abstained from spending unproductively was their own property and because the abstaining was their own action.

Further, the man who abstains from the consumption of wealth in order to profit by it as capital runs the risk of losing it, whether he employs it himself or lends it to another. In either case it is absurd to expect him to run the risk without chance of advantage. In the former he must even add the labour of administration to the cares of the capitalist, and such labour is not less entitled to recompense than that of the operative. In the latter, although he may so lend that the danger of loss is trifling, it is never wholly eliminated, and where security is good the remuneration for mere investment is small.

Moreover, the return for capital, the share of produce which its owner obtains for the loan of it, varies naturally according to conditions of demand and supply, and very largely owing to the demand of those who seek the wealth of others for the sake of the profit which they believe they can derive from it as capital. But manifestly there is no injustice in men paying for the use of what is not their own a share of the profit or produce which the use of it brings them. On the contrary, it is only right that they should do so in proportion both to the amount of the capital and the length of time during which its use is obtained.

The rightful ownership of the wealth from which capital is formed, the abstinence from consumption involved in its formation, the risk run in its employment or investment, and the benefit conferred on enterprise and labour by the use of it, are the grounds on which the claim of capital to remuneration rests, and on which it is to be defended. Clearer and stronger grounds there cannot be. The attempts to assail and reject them show only intellectual weakness

and wilfulness; not necessarily incapacity for a certain kind of popular writing and speaking on social subjects, but utter incompetency to apprehend the rudimentary principles of social science, and especially of economics. Yet Socialists persist in such attempts.

They have very generally even sought to resuscitate the mediæval superstition that interest is inherently unjustifiable. They tell us, as if it were a new discovery, instead of an antiquated and most justly discredited dogma, that money is by nature barren, and can of right yield no interest. They elaborately argue that if capital were honest it would be content to take no profit. Credit, they say, should be gratuitous. They would have us believe that if a man has a field or a house he should be satisfied if at the end of the lease the tenant hands it over to him in the condition in which he received it, and is unreasonable if he looks for anything more in the shape of rent. Some of them even think that the rent of a field should be what they call "prairie value," a something so indefinite that perhaps the only thing certain about it is that it would be in general much less than the interest of the wealth expended as capital on the field, or, in Carlylean phrase, "a frightful minus quantity." There are many socialistic variations of the same tune. But they are all discordant and nonsensical. There was some excuse for the early Christian Fathers and mediæval Churchmen entertaining such foolish notions, because they fancied they found them in the Scriptures, to the whole teaching of which they deemed themselves bound to yield implicit obedience.* But Socialists have in general no such plea to urge.

Nor have they any new arguments to supply the place formerly filled by authority. The ancient sophism that money is sterile, and that as the essence of every equitable loan is precisely to return what was lent or its equivalent, to exact interest is a sort of robbery, is still the only thing like an argument which the most recent Socialists can adduce. As regards this argument Mr. Lecky hardly speaks too strongly when he says, "it is enough to make one ashamed of one's species to think that Bentham was the first to bring into notice the simple consideration that if the borrower employs the borrowed money in buying bulls and cows, and if these produce

[* It must be remembered that in antiquity and the Middle Ages interest was generally most exorbitant. See the elaborate examination of this question in Mallock's "A Critical Examination of Socialism," chaps. 13 and 14.]

calves to ten times the value of the interest, the money borrowed can scarcely be said to be sterile or the borrower a loser." But what are we to think of those who are unable to see the force of such a consideration even when it has been pointed out to them ? What are we to think of the intelligence of those whose only answer to it is, " We are not reasoning about bulls and cows but about pieces of gold and silver, which do not beget smaller pieces, and so multiply ? " The argument plainly implies that gold and silver pieces in order to be productive must be exchanged ; and the point of it is that they are entitled to interest because of what their borrower gains from their equivalents, the bulls and cows bought with them.

The Collectivists display no more wisdom in their views regarding capital than the advocates of the oldest and crudest schemes of Socialism. They do not, it is true, maintain that capital is powerless, or useless, or essentially hurtful. They admit that it contributes to production, and object only to its being held by individuals. But the admission that it is a natural and important factor in production does not in the least prevent their bringing against profits, rents, and interest, those accusations of dishonesty, injustice, exploitation of labour, etc., which are not only baseless but ludicrous, when once the utility or productivity of capital is acknowledged.

Collectivism likewise threatens to prove as hostile as Communism could be to the maintenance and increase of capital. It undertakes to organise society in a way which would rapidly destroy the capital which exists and prevent the formation of capital in the future. It professes not to forbid men to possess wealth, or even enormous wealth, but it is quite resolved that they shall not use any portion of their wealth as capital. In order to establish their system the leading representatives of Collectivism do not suggest the killing or robbing of the capitalists of a nation, but the buying them out with annuities, which they will only be allowed to spend unproductively. In other words, the rich are to be prevented from employing their wealth as capital, but guaranteed the enjoyment of it through the contributions of the community so long as it is not applied to aid labour ; and the poor are to be required to help in paying enormous annuities to capitalists like the Duke of Westminster and Baron Rothschild, on condition of their being

henceforth mere consumers of wealth. At the same time all the producers or labourers in a community are to be prohibited from forming capital of their own, but to be compelled to contribute to the maintenance of a collective capital, in which each individual can have only an infinitesimal interest. Can a plan more certain to diminish capital and increase poverty be imagined ?

The foregoing remarks may have been sufficient to show that the teaching of Socialists as to capital has not only no claim to be regarded as scientific truth, but is radically erroneous. Notwithstanding all that Socialists have urged to the contrary, it remains clear and certain that capital and labour, even under the régime of private property and personal freedom, are indispensable to each other and essentially beneficial to each other. The immediate interests of capitalists and labourers, as of all buyers and sellers, are, indeed, in each particular instance opposed ; but on the whole and in the long run they will coincide. In spite of a direct personal contrariety of interests between each seller and buyer, it is clearly the great general interest of every seller that there should be plenty of buyers possessed of plenty to buy with. Were a shop-keeper to ascribe his failure in business to the number of his customers and the extent of their purchases, he would be considered insane. It is precisely the same absurdity to refer the poverty of labourers to capital, and to represent capitalists as their natural enemies.

Does it follow that all the griefs of labour against capital are without warrant, and that all the angry feelings which labourers have entertained towards capitalists have had no reasonable foundation ? By no means. Does it follow that all capital is honestly gained and honourably used ? By no means. Does it follow that a great many capitalists do not fail to treat labour as they ought and to appreciate their indebtedness to it as they ought ? By no means. Does it follow that labour is more to blame than capital for the evils of our industrial and social condition ? By no means.

Political economists have been accused of returning, or at least of suggesting, affirmative answers to these questions. There is probably little, if any, truth in the charge. But were it true, much of the distrust and dislike shown by the working classes towards economists and their science could be accounted for and justified. Economists have certainly no warrant in their science, or in facts,

to answer any of these questions affirmatively. It is their duty to set forth what is true both about labour and capital; it is their shame if they plead as partisans the cause either of capital or of labour. They are bound by regard to truth, and in the interest even of labour, to expose the falsity of such accusations as Socialists bring against capital itself, and against capitalists as a class; but they are equally bound not to deny or to excuse the abuses of capital or the demerits of capitalists. Some capitalists are probably as bad as Socialists represent the class to be; doubtless few of them are as good as they ought to be.

The *mere capitalist* is never a satisfactory human being, and is often a very despicable one. The man of wealth who takes no trouble even in the administration of his capital, who is a simple investor or sleeping partner, and devotes his abilities and means neither to the public service nor to the promotion of any important cause, but is active only in consumption and self-gratification, well deserves contempt and condemnation. The world gets benefit from his capital indeed, but without exertion or merit of his, and it would get it not less were he dead. His life is a continuous violation of duty, since duty demands from every man labour according to his ability, service according to his means. Unfortunately there are not only many such capitalists, but many such who consume what they so easily get in waste and vice. Against them socialistic criticism is far from wholly inapplicable. Their prevalence goes a considerable way, perhaps, to explain the success of socialistic propagandism.

But the waking and active capitalist may be as objectionable as the sleeping and inactive one. He is a man whose thoughts and energies are necessarily concentrated on the pursuit of wealth, and, therefore, a man specially apt to become possessed by the demon of avarice, enslaved by the desire of gain, hard and selfish, heedless of the claims of justice and sympathy. It is only too possible that workmen may have very real and serious grievances against their capitalist employers. Wherever labourers have been ignorant, politically feeble and fettered, divided or isolated—wherever they have not learned to combine, or been so circumstanced that they could not combine their forces and give an effective expression to their wishes—capitalists have taken full advantage of their inexperience, their weakness, and their disunion. Nowhere

would it be safe for working men to trust merely to the justice of capitalists. Everywhere it would be ridiculous for them to trust to their generosity. For labour to be on its guard against the selfishness of capital, for labour to organise itself for self-defence and the attainment of its due, is only ordinary prudence.

Then, while it is very easy to show against Socialism the legitimacy of expecting profit from capital, of claiming a rent for land, or of taking interest for the loan of money, it is impossible to defend many of the practices prevalent in the industrial, commercial, and financial world. The mendacious puffery of wares, the dishonest adulteration of goods, the mean tricks of trade, the commercial devices for the spoliation of the inexperienced and unwary, so prevalent among us, are, of course, discreditable to our present civilisation. We have become so accustomed to them that we do not feel their hatefulness as we ought. Socialism is beneficial in so far as it incites us to hate them, although we must find some other remedy for them than the drastic one which it recommends. The greatest fortunes of our age have been made not from agriculture, manufactures, or what is commonly called trade, but by speculation. This has now become a most elaborate and powerful art. I do not say that it is not an art which has a legitimate and even necessary place in our economical system, or that fortunes may not be legitimately made by it. But, without a doubt, it is an art which has often been most wickedly and cruelly exercised, and many of the largest fortunes made by it have been made with very dirty hands. Even in this age of low interest the skilled speculator can make an exorbitant percentage on his money by seemingly taking upon himself great risks which he knows how to evade by bringing ruin upon hundreds of simpler and less-informed individuals, or even, perhaps, upon a whole people struggling to become a nation or sinking under the pressure of debt and taxation. There are great money-lords who in our own generation have been as successful robbers as the most rapacious and unscrupulous of mediæval warriors.

Further, men who as capitalists receive only a very moderate profit on their capital may as employers of labour render themselves justly objectionable to their workmen by an overbearing demeanour, by displays of bad temper, by arbitrary requirements and unreasonable expectations, by a want of frankness, courtesy, and

friendliness in their behaviour. They may pay their workmen the wages of their labour, yet withhold from them the respect due to them as men who are their own equals as men, and the consideration due to them as their partners in a contract, rendering at least an equivalent for what they receive and contributing to their prosperity. They may plainly show that they do not realise that they are living in a free and democratic age, and that they are not the masters of slaves or serfs. And they may thus, and often really do thus, most grievously and foolishly strain and embitter the relations between themselves and their workmen.

I would only add that capitalists may be fairly expected to recognise their special indebtedness to their operatives by a special interest in their welfare. A capitalist has become, let us suppose, a man of great wealth, and he has made his fortune honestly; he has paid his workmen their reasonable wages; the rate of his own profits has been moderate, or even small. Still, as all the many men whom he has employed have contributed each something to his fortune, he is a man of great wealth. Ought he not to feel that he owes some gratitude to his workmen? Surely he ought. May society not look to him to take a special interest in the improvement of the condition of the operative class to whose labours he has chiefly owed his success? Surely it may. And should this man make even most munificent public benefactions of a merely general kind—should he build town-halls, endow churches, and leave large legacies to missions and charities—yet overlook the class by the aid of which he has made his wealth, his charity, it seems to me, can by no means be pronounced without flaw. The capitalists of this country could, I am convinced, if they would only gird themselves up to the task, do greater things for our labouring classes than any absolute ruler can for those of his empire. I know of no problem as to the requirements of the labouring classes which he could solve by the methods of despotism which they might not solve better by the methods of freedom. No class of men is called to a nobler mission than the capitalists of Great Britain. It is their interest as well as their duty to listen to the call.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

Marxian Doctrine of Capital

The theory of Marx as to the nature and effects of capitalistic production rests on his theory as to the cause and measure of value. And in

this respect his system of economics, which is substantially constituted by these two theories, has the merit of consistency. If sundry economists who preceded him in taking the same view of the relation of labour to value gave quite a different view of the relation of labour to capital, we can only attribute that to defective logic or imperfect courage. The consequences which he deduces from his theory of value are really implied in it. That theory is the foundation-stone of the whole Marxian structure. It is, however, as we have seen in the previous chapter, one which only requires to be tried and tested to crumble into dust.

Of late there are symptoms that some of the most cultured advocates of Social Democracy are becoming ashamed of the Marxian theory of value. At least I observe that some of our Fabians are beginning to say that collectivist economics is independent of any particular theory of value and compatible with an acceptance of the theory of value with which the names of Walras and Jevons, Menger and Böhm-Bawerk, are familiarly associated. But why have they not also given some reasons for their opinion ? It seems to me that they must inevitably perceive it to be an error as soon as they make any serious attempt to deduce the Marxian theory of surplus-value either without any theory of value, or from any other theory of value than that on which Marx relied. The system of Marx cannot be half accepted and half rejected ; it must stand or fall as a whole.

While Marx was no more the first to maintain that the profit of the capitalist is wholly drawn from unpaid labour than that labour alone creates value, he was also no less the first to attempt a complete demonstration of the former than of the latter of those doctrines. His originality and merit were of the same kind as regards both. It is only with the former that we have at present to concern ourselves.

Proudhon began his investigation of the nature of property by defining property as " theft." Marx starts on his investigation of the nature of capitalist production with the conception that capital consists of " the means of exploitation." The coincidence is remarkable ; but Marx is very often to be found stepping in the footmarks of the man whom he particularly delighted to depreciate. No impartial thinker has approved of, or can approve of, his definition of capital. If he wished to have a term for " the means of exploitation," he should have invented one, and not appropriated a word which has in economic science a recognised signification quite different from that which he sought to substitute for it. Capital as generally understood by economists is wealth which is used not for the direct gratification of desire but as a means of producing additional wealth. Every instrument auxiliary to labour and productive of wealth is in this sense capital. In the Marxian sense no such instrument is capital unless the possessor of it can, by entrusting or lending it to another, derive from it a benefit

to himself which is robbery of the other. A strange notion! Could a manufacturer, by some grand mechanical contrivance, himself work the whole machinery of his factory, and dispense with labourers altogether, he would forthwith cease to be a capitalist in the Marxian sense. And, on the other hand, were some ingenious man, by much hard thinking and through much self-sacrifice, to invent an instrument by the help of which there could be performed in a single day as much work as would otherwise require ten days' toil, to charge for the loan of it a shilling or even a penny more than an equivalent for its deterioration while employed by its borrower, he would become a capitalist and an exploiter. Such a conception of capital is its own refutation. It obviously implies the assumption that capital is essentially sterile, and unentitled to any profit. This assumption also needs no special refutation. Capital by itself is indeed unproductive. But so is labour by itself. If capital can produce nothing without natural agents and labour, labour can produce nothing without natural agents, and extremely little without capital.

By representing capital as "an historic category" Marx meant that it had not existed in all stages of society, and was even a comparatively late phenomenon in history. But this view was only a consequence of the conception which he had formed of the nature of capital, not a result of historic investigation. Capital must be admitted, indeed, to have had an origin in history, to have been derived from labour and natural agents, and not to be, as labour and natural agents are, primordial in production; it is only a secondary, not a primary, factor of production. But if it is conceived of in its proper acceptation as wealth devoted to production, it must have been almost coeval with man. History does not inform us of any age in which capital thus understood was non-existent. "Man," it has been said, "is a tool-using animal." But the simplest tool is an instrument of production equally with the most complex machine, and as such is equally capital. Man as a rational being is naturally endowed with the power of seeing that he can often better attain his ends indirectly by the use of means with which he can provide himself than by the immediate and direct action of his own members. This power, a universal and distinctive characteristic of humanity, is the root alike of invention and of capital, two of the chief secondary factors of production. Some outgrowths of it are to be found among the most uncultured peoples of the earth; and the latest, most elaborate, and most subtle of the mechanical, commercial, and capitalistic contrivances and processes adopted in the most advanced of modern nations are only its most evolved results.

That capital, in the Marxian sense, is "an historic category" may be doubted. No one, it is true, will refuse to admit that capital may grow, and often has grown, by exploitation, by appropriation of the

wealth created by unpaid labour. But that is not what Marx had to show in order to confirm and justify his conception of capital. What he required to prove was that it necessarily and exclusively so grows; that the exploitation of labour is its essential function, and the whole secret and source of its accumulation. That is what he has not done. Hence capital, as defined by him, is rather a mythic or metaphysical than "an historic category," originating as it does in the imaginative or dialectic identification of the nature of capital with its abuse, and in the personification of it as "a vampire." While admitting that the present era is a capitalist era, we may reasonably hold that "the capitalist era" of Marx is, if anywhere, still in the future, awaiting, perhaps, its advent in Collectivism.

Marx is mistaken when he represents capital as a product of circulation which makes its first appearance in the form of money. On the contrary, it is just the commodities which constitute capital that are circulated, and money presupposes both their existence and their circulation. Neither the means of production nor of exploitation originated in circulation and money. "The modern history of capital" may, perhaps, be dated from the sixteenth century, but it was preceded by a mediæval history of capital, and that again by an ancient history of it. The time of the utmost exploitation of labour by capital was that of slavery, when the capitalist made of the labourer a mere instrument of production, a mere portion of his capital. That money may not be capital Marx himself admits; but having made the admission he should have further allowed that money is not otherwise capital than any commodity may be capital. When he affirms that "if we abstract from the material substance of the circulation of commodities—that is, from the exchange of the various use-values—and consider only the economic forms produced by this process of circulation, we find its final result to be money," he falls again into the same error as when he maintained that through abstraction of the use-values of commodities we find them to be mere congelations or crystals of the social substance, human labour in the abstract. In other words, he again adopts the irrational intellectual procedure which in the Middle Ages peopled the world of thought with "entities" and "quiddities." The abstraction which he recommends is of the kind which only generates fictitious notions and fallacious arguments.

The whole of that portion of his argument which is intended to prove that profit cannot arise in the process of circulation or exchange is also dependent on an abstract notion to which nothing real corresponds. Circulation as he conceives of it, circulation as an exchange either of equivalents in which no one gains, or of non-equivalents in which what one gains another loses, is not a normal economic process, or the process treated of in economic science. In an exchange, as understood in economics, both parties to it believe it to be for their advantage.

In no case of sale does either the buyer or the seller seek either a mere equivalent or a loss. Were the view of Marx correct, there should not be any profits made in the distributing trades. The ability of certain manufacturers to buy their raw materials cheaper and to obtain for their products a wider and better market than their rivals is a copious source of profit to them. Circulation or exchange—the actual process, not the fictitious Marxian abstraction of it—so augments the useful co-operation of the powers of nature and of man as in countless cases enormously to aid production and to increase profits. The Marxian "demonstration" of the source of surplus-value has, in fact, scarcely even an appearance of applicability in the sphere of commerce, and is practically confined by its author to that of industry.

Marx further denies that profit can arise from any portion of capital except such as is expended on wages, or what he calls *variable capital*. He holds that all other capital—what he calls *constant capital*—is unproductive of profit. While he admits that capital incorporated in machinery contributes powerfully to production, he yet asserts that it has no influence whatever on the production of surplus-value. This monstrous paradox he obviously required to maintain before he could pretend to make out that capital grows only by the exploitation of labour. He had the woeful courage to do so; and his followers have had the credulity to believe him in defiance alike of reason and of experience.

Consider what the paradox implies. Take two capitalists, AB and CD. Suppose AB to have a capital of £1,000; to expend half of it in wages amounting to £50 a year to each of ten tailors, and half of it in materials for them to work on; and to find himself at the close of the year to have made profit to the extent of £500. Suppose CD to have a capital of £100,000, of which £99,500 are invested in pearls, while the remaining £500 are expended in wages to ten workmen who string the pearls into necklaces, etc. What amount of profit should, according to the doctrine of Marx, fall to CD during the year? Just the same as to AB, because, although his total capital is a hundred times greater, his variable capital is the same. In other words, if Marx is correct, CD must expect to get 99½ per cent. less profit on his capital than AB. Should he get the same rate of profit the amount of it would be not £500 but £5,000. In this latter case, however, he must, according to the Marxian economics, rob his workmen to the extent of £500 each, not like AB only to the extent of £50 each. And to accomplish that—to appropriate to himself £500 out of the annual wages due to a common workman—would surely be a feat not less remarkable than to take the breeches off a kilted highlander or to extract sunbeams from cucumbers.*

The view of Marx is undoubtedly erroneous. Profits are derivable

* Cf. Böhm-Bawerk's "Capital and Interest." pp. 358-62.

from all the factors of production, and not merely from labour. Greater disposable wealth or purchasing power, superior intelligence in buying, selling, and management, the possession of more powerful or perfect machinery, and other advantages are sufficient to explain why one manufacturer gathers far more surplus-value than another, although he neither employs more labourers nor pays them worse. The masters who make most profit seldom make it by paying lower wages than their rivals. Could manufacturers dispense with human labour altogether, and substitute for it the action of automatic machines, they would acquire surplus-value not less than at present. Only on condition of acquiring such value would they consent to produce at all. Profit and loss in business are not proportional to what Marx calls the variable capital but to the total capital employed in it. To maintain the reverse implies blindness to the most obvious and indubitable facts of industrial and commercial life.

We may now see how hopeless must be the attempt of Marx to prove that the profits of the capitalist are derived entirely from the robbery of the labourer. Every principle which he laid down with a view to proving it has been found to be false. Every proposition from which he would deduce the conclusion at which he desires to arrive has been shown to be contrary to reason and to fact.

Let us look, however, at such argumentation as he favours us with. The capitalist, we are first told, cannot find profit elsewhere than in labour-power, because labour-power has the peculiar quality of being the sole source of value. But that reason has been already disposed of. Marx, we have seen, tried but utterly failed to justify it. Labour-power has not the peculiar quality which he ascribes to it. It is not the sole source of value. And, therefore, it is not to be inferred that value can be derived from no other source.

Labour-power, Marx further assures us, is not only the sole source of value but has itself a value—" the value of the social normal labour-time incorporated in it, or necessary to its reproduction ; in this case, the value of the means of subsistence necessary to the maintenance of the labourer." But here again he assumes that he has proved what he has not proved, and what is even, as we have seen, certainly false. He imagines that he has shown that the duration of labour is the measure of its value ; and that he has consequently a standard by which he can tell definitely how much of it is paid for, and how much of its value is appropriated by the capitalist. But the duration of labour is no such measure, and Marx has not a standard of the kind which he supposes. All his assertions as to the extent of the exploitation of labour are, therefore, of necessity arbitrary.

Marx *supposes* that labour-power can restore itself, or provide itself with the physically indispensable means of subsistence, by the labour of six hours, and that the value of these means exactly represents the

value of that labour. There is no reason for either supposition. There is no definite period discoverable in which labour will produce the value of the means necessary to its reproduction; and there is no ground for regarding the value of these means as the natural or appropriate remuneration of the labour-power exerted during that period. The physically indispensable means of subsistence are the minimum on which labour-power can be sustained, not the measure or criterion of its value, not a necessary or normal, just or reasonable, standard of wages. What return is due to labour cannot be determined in any such easy, simple, definite way as Marx would have us believe.

His next step is the most extraordinary of all. It is to treat what he had *professedly supposed merely for the sake of argument as true, to be true and without need of argument.* It is to affirm as fact, without producing any kind of evidence, that the labourer who had only been *assumed* to be entitled to give the capitalist six hours' work for three shillings of pay, *cannot give* more than that amount of work for that amount of pay without being robbed by the capitalist to the extent of the excess of work. A more loose and illusory argument there could not be; and yet it is all that we get at the very point where argument of the strictest and strongest kind is most needed.

The labour which the capitalist pays for produces, according to Marx, no profit, any more than what he calls constant capital. If the capitalist, therefore, received only the labour of six hours from each of his workmen he would make no profit. Marx expounds at great length his conception of what takes place in the conversion of 10 lbs. of cotton into yarn when the process is effected by means of six hours' labour paid for at its natural value. He distinguishes and dwells on the cost of the different factors in the process, and assures us that in this case the capitalist can get no more for his cotton yarn than the total cost of its production, or, in other words, must necessarily fail to create surplus-value. Yet he does not attempt to show us on what his assurance is founded; does not discuss the question whether the capitalist might not even in the case supposed obtain a profit. There is no element of argument in his illustration. The hypothetical example on which he discourses so elaborately doubtless clearly expresses his view; but it does not in the slightest degree confirm it.

The capitalist, then, according to Marx, cannot get profit either from his constant capital or from the labour which he pays for. But, says he quite gravely, the capitalist *compels* the labourer to give him twelve hours' labour instead of six, and for the price of six; and *thus* he is able to appropriate to himself as much of the value of labour as that which he allows the labourer to retain.

Observe that, according to the hypothesis of Marx himself, the workmen are not only free, but as yet undegraded and unmanned by the operation of the system of capitalism. Yet he asks us to believe

that they submit to give the capitalist twice the amount of labour which they are paid for, twelve hours instead of six. The capitalist, according to Marx, cannot give them less than the value of their six hours of labour. Why, then, should they give him six hours gratis? If he is to make profit at all he cannot refuse to accept from them one hour or even half an hour more, and yet pay them as much for the six and a half or seven hours as Marx represents him as paying for the twelve hours. In a word, Marx attributes to the capitalist a power and to the workmen a foolishness incredible on any hypothesis, but especially incredible on his own, seeing that if the capitalist is wholly dependent on human labour for his profit he must be weak, and if the labour-power of the workmen is the sole source of value they must be blind indeed if they do not recognise their own strength, and see that the capitalist must take any amount of time, however little beyond six hours, which they are pleased to grant him.

The only semblance of reason which Marx gives for ascribing to the capitalist such power as he does is that "he who once realises the exchange value of labour-power, or of any other commodity, parts with its use-value;" that "the use-value of labour-power once bought belongs just as much to its buyer as the use-value of oil after it has been sold belongs to the dealer who has bought it;" that "when labour actually begins it has already ceased to belong to the labourer, and consequently cannot again be sold by him." This pretence of proof Prof. Wolf of Zürich quite justly stigmatises as "eitel Humbug." It is equivalent to asserting that the proprietor of a house cannot let it for a year and then refuse to allow the tenant to occupy it another year free of rent; that if the possessor of a reaping-machine sells the use of it for a limited time, he loses his rights over it for an unlimited time. A workman sells the use of his labour-power on certain conditions for a certain time; he does not sell himself, nor does he sell his labour, nor the use of his labour-power, on other conditions or for a longer time than he himself consents to.

Further, Marx shows himself inconsiderate and inconsistent when he represents the capitalist as appropriating to himself the value of the six hours of labour for which he does not pay the workmen. Marx repeatedly recognises the truth of the economic law that "the value of commodities tends to diminish as the amount of the product per unit of labour-cost increases." But it is an obvious and necessary inference from it that the capitalist would not, and could not, appropriate the value of the labour which he did not pay for; that the three shillings of which he sought to rob each labourer daily would not stay in his own pocket but would take to itself wings and fly into the pockets of the public by reducing the price of commodities three shillings to the consumer.

The illustrative example by which Marx endeavours to make perfectly

plain to us how "the capitalistic trick" is performed still remains for consideration. It is fully presented in the extract on pp. 116-117. As I have already attempted to refute all the erroneous principles and suppositions which are expressed or implied in that extract, I shall now merely set over against it an extract from an eminent American economist, which contains the clearest and most conclusive exposure of it that has come under my notice.

Mr. Gunton writes thus:

"In demonstrating the operation of the law of economic value, Marx first manufactures 10 lbs. of cotton yarn, in which the cost of the different factors consumed is stated as follows:

Cost of raw cotton	10*s.*
Cost of wear and tear of machinery . .	2*s.*
Cost of labour-power	3*s.*
Total cost	15*s.*

"Marx then tells us the same amount of labour is expended on the production of 15*s.* in gold, so that the 10 lbs. of yarn and the 15*s.* are the exact economic equivalents of each other. To use his own formula, the case stands thus: 15*s.* value of yarn = 10*s.* raw cotton + 2*s.* machinery + 3*s.* labour-power; and 15*s.* is all the capitalist can get for his yarn, and no surplus value is produced. Marx then produces for us 20 lbs. of yarn, in the process of producing which a surplus value of 3*s.* is created. He sees, of course, that in producing 20 lbs. of yarn the raw material consumed and the wear and tear will be twice as great as in the production of 10 lbs.; but he discovers that the labourer lives twenty-four hours on 3*s.*, and, in the first process, works only six hours a day to earn the 3*s.* He now makes him work twelve hours a day and produce 20 instead of 10 lbs. of yarn. And since the labourer can live now, as before, on 3*s.* a day, he only pays him 3*s.* for twelve hours' labour. Accordingly, the results of the second process are as follows:

Cost of raw cotton	20*s.*
Cost of wear and tear of machinery . .	4*s.*
Cost of labour power	3*s.*
Total cost	27*s.*

"Marx assumes that, since the value of 10 lbs. of yarn is 15*s.*, that of 20 lbs. must be 30*s.*; hence 3*s.* surplus value has been created. To use his formula, the 'prolonged process' stands thus: 30*s.* value of yarn = 20*s.* raw cotton + 4*s.* machinery + 3*s.* labour-power + 3*s.* surplus value. Then, as with a flourish of trumpets, he exclaims: 'The trick has at last succeeded; money has been converted into capital.' And as if to assure us that everything has been done on the square, he adds: 'Every condition of the problem is satisfied, while the laws that regulate the exchange of commodities have been in no way violated. . . . . Yet for all that, he [the capitalist] draws 3*s.* more from circulation than he originally threw into it.'

"If we ask whence came this 3*s.* surplus value, he promptly replies: From prolonging the working-day to twelve hours and thereby making the labour produce 20 instead of 10 lbs. of yarn for the same pay. Now the trick has surely succeeded, and it almost seems as if the capitalist had performed it; but let us look at it once more.

"In the first instance the case stood: 15*s.* value of yarn = 10*s.* raw cotton + 2*s.* machinery + 3*s.* labour-power. Why was the value of the yarn

just 15*s.*? Because, explains Marx at great length, '15*s.* were spent in the open market upon the constitutent elements of the product, or (what amounts to the same thing) upon the factors of the labour process.' He explicitly tells us that the only reason why the capitalist could not get 16*s.* or 17*s.* for his yarn was that only 15*s.* had been consumed in its production.

"Now let us look at the 20 lbs. of yarn produced under 'the prolonged process' in the light of the law Marx has applied to the production of the 10 lbs. Here the cost of the raw material is 20*s.*; wear and tear, 4*s.*; labour power, 3*s.*; total cost, 27*s.* Therefore, according to the above law, the total value of the product is 27*s.* 'Oh, no!' exclaims Marx, 'that would give no surplus value.' The cost of the yarn in this case, he admits, is only 27*s.*, but he insists that its *value* is 30*s.* According to Marx, then, his economic law of value works thus: 10*s.* + 2*s.* + 3*s.* cost = 15*s.* value; while 20*s.* + 4*s.* + 3*s.* cost = 30*s.* value. In other words, 15*s.* = 15*s.*, but 27*s.* = 30*s.* Now, by what application of his own law of value, according to which 15*s.* cost can only produce 15*s.* value, can he make 27*s.* cost produce 30*s.* value? Clearly, if the 20 lbs. of yarn, the production of which only cost 27*s.*, can have a value of 30*s.*, then by the same law the 10 lbs. of yarn, whose production cost 15*s.*, can have a value of 16*s.* 6*d.* To assume that while a cost of 15*s.* cannot yield a value of more than 15*s.* a cost of 27*s.* can yield a value of 30*s.* is to violate alike the laws of logic and the rules of arithmetic; and this self-contradiction destroys the whole basis of his theory. Manifestly surplus value was no more created in the production of the 20 lbs. of yarn than in that of 10 lbs. The 3*s.* here paraded as surplus value is a pure invention of Marx. True, 'the trick has at last succeeded;' but it was performed by Marx, and not by the capitalist. It is obviously a trick of metaphysics, and not of economics. The only exploitation here revealed is the exploitation of socialistic credulity, and not of economic labour-power."*

We may now consider ourselves entitled to reject *in toto* that portion of the teaching of Marx in "Capital," which claims to be theory or science. It fulfils none of its promises, justifies none of its pretensions, and is, indeed, regarded from a scientific point of view, the greatest failure which can be found in the whole history of economics. No man with an intellect so vigorous, and who had read and thought so much on economic subjects, has erred so completely, so extravagantly, as to the fundamental principles and laws of economic science. The only discovery which he has made is that of "a mare's nest." His pretended demonstration is not a logical chain of established truths, but a rope of metaphysical cobwebs thrown around arbitrary suppositions.

And the cause of his failure is obvious. Passion is a bad counsellor. And the soul of Marx was filled with passion, with party hate, with personal animosities, with revolutionary ambition. His interest in economics was neither that of the scientist nor of the philanthropist, but of the political and social agitator; and he put forth his strength entirely in manipulating it into an instrument of agitation. That was the chief source of such success as he obtained. There was wide discontent. He framed a doctrine with a view to justify and inflame it.

* George Gunton, "Economic Basis of Socialism," in the *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. iv., 1889, pp. 568-71.

He taught masses of men just what they were anxious to believe; and hence they believed him.

That portion of the treatise of Marx which deals with the effects of capitalist production is, on the other hand, of very considerable value. It is also the fullest expression of what was best in his nature, his sympathy with the poor; a sympathy which, although by no means pure, was undoubtedly sincere and intense. The large manufacturing system during the first fifty years of its history in this country was enormously productive, not only of wealth, but of misery, of vice, of human degradation. The glitter of the riches which it created so dazzled the eyes of the vast majority of men that they were blind to the disorganisation, the oppression, the abominations, which it covered. The most honest and intelligent persons took far too rosy a view of it, or, at the most, timidly apologised for practices which they should have felt to be intolerable. But the reaction at length came. The struggles of the victims of the system made themselves felt, and their cries awakened the slumbering conscience of the nation. The claims of justice and of humanity found persistent and persuasive advocates. Careful investigations were instituted, and important reforms initiated.

In the transition period, when the first era of the large manufacturing system, the era of lawless individualistic enterprise, the era of anarchy, had given place to its second era, the era of regulated development, of incipient but growing organisation, Marx, by his work on "Capital," and his friend Engels, by his book on the "Condition of the Working Classes in England in 1844," did excellent service by concentrating as it were into these *foci* the light which parliamentary inquiries had elicited as to the evils of a capitalism allowed to trample on physiological and moral laws, and causing it thence to radiate over the world. It is true, indeed, that Marx, in that portion of his work to which I refer, continually confounds merely incidental with necessary consequences. Still the evils which he so vigorously describes and assails were mostly real consequences; and his exposure of them must have helped to destroy them, and to render their return impossible.

On the inferences which he has drawn from his doctrine, and which I have already stated on pp. 116-117, my remarks will be very brief.

1. The charge which Marx brings against the capitalist, of striving to appropriate more and more of the productive power of labour by lengthening the labour day, is of course, one in which there is a considerable measure of truth. All that he blames the capitalist for having done with this intent he shows from unexceptionable authorities that the capitalist had actually done. Unquestionably the desire of the capitalist to extend as much as he can the labour day is one against which labourers do well to be on their guard, and which they are justified in endeavouring to thwart whenever it demands what is unreasonable.

Experience proves that with prudence, firmness, and union, they can do so; and that Marx was quite mistaken in thinking that the capitalist must be successful in his attempts to overstep "the moral and even the merely physical maximum bounds of the working day." Machinery has not helped the capitalist to attain that end. For a time, indeed, when social continuity was violently disrupted and industry largely disorganised by its sudden and rapid introduction, it seemed as if it would do so; but it has had, in reality, a contrary effect. Owing to condensing population within narrow circuits, and associating intelligences and forces, the large manufacturing system is just what has rendered possible the rise and growth of powerful trade unions, and has transferred political power from the hands of employers to those of the employed. Hence there has been within the last forty years, and especially in large industries, a notable shortening of the working day. At the present time the average working week consists certainly of less than fifty hours. Thus already workmen have very generally as much leisure time as labour time. The labour time will doubtless be still further abbreviated, and for all classes of workmen. When this takes place, what is even now a very important question for workmen, that as to the right use of their leisure time, will become the chief question.

2. The charge that the capitalist contrives by the aid of machinery so to intensify labour as to compensate him for any loss incurred by shortening its duration, is also not without a certain amount of truth. Labour may be excessive without being prolonged. Hard running for four hours may be more exhausting than steady walking during twelve hours. Marx had no difficulty in showing from the testimony of factory inspectors and other authorities that manufacturers managed, after the passage of the Factory Acts, to get their operatives to compress the work of twelve hours into less than ten, and to labour at a rate which ruined their health and shortened their lives. It is very probable that there may still be industries in which labour is carried on at an excessively rapid pace, and where consequently the labourers are overdriven, although they may have nothing to complain of as regards the mere length of their working day. But this also can be checked and prevented. It is no more out of the power of the workmen, or beyond the province of legislation, to put a stop to the excessive intensification than to the undue prolongation of labour. There can be no reasonable doubt that, on the whole, machinery has lightened as well as shortened labour. The heaviest labour which men perform is that which they execute by the exertion of their muscles and members without any aid from machinery. J. S. Mill has said: "It is questionable if all the mechanical inventions yet made have lightened the day's toil of any human being." It seems to me that there can be no question at all that mechanical

inventions *have* lightened the day's toil of millions of human beings; although in many cases where they ought to have done so they have not, owing to human greed and perversity.

3. Marx touched a very sore point in the capitalist and manufacturing system when he dwelt on the extent to which it had appropriated the labour-power of women and children. It had been allowed to do so to the most monstrous extent. Parents sold the labour-power of children of six years of age to masters who forced these children to toil from five in the morning to eight in the evening; and British law treated the criminals, for whom no punishment in the statute-book would have been too severe, as innocent—treated such unnatural and abominable oppression and slavery as a part of British liberty. Married women, tempted by their insensate avarice or, perhaps, constrained by drunken, lazy, brutal husbands, were permitted, without being in any way restrained or discouraged, to engage in employments which necessarily involved the neglect of their children and households, and the sacrifice of all the ends for which the family has been instituted. Certainly these things ought not to have been. And such things are not only not necessary, but tend to the impoverishment, enfeeblement, and decay of nations, and to the injury of all classes in a nation. Nor are they essential to the capitalist and manufacturing system; they are only evils incidental to it, and especially to the initial and anarchical stage of its history. They have already been largely got rid of. The influence of the system, in virtue of the increased demand which it makes for female industry, far from being exclusively evil, is, on the whole, most beneficial. While it is undesirable that married women should become, otherwise than in exceptional circumstances, labourers for wages, it is greatly to be wished that all well-conducted unmarried women of the working class should be able to maintain themselves in honest independence by finding employment in whatever occupations are suited to them.

4. Marx attached great importance to his doctrine of the formation under the capitalist system of an industrial reserve army. He rejected Lassalle's "iron law;" but he believed that he had himself discovered a law harder than iron, one which "rivets the labourer to capital more firmly than the wedges of Vulcan did Prometheus to the rock." He controverted with extreme superciliousness, and, it must be added, with equal superficiality, the Malthusian theory, but maintained the practical conclusion generally, although erroneously, inferred from it by Malthusians. Without mentioning Dr. Sadler, he substantially adopted his extraordinary opinion that different social stages or conditions have different laws of human increase. Dr. Sadler composed two bulky volumes to prove that the law of human increase was one which varied with circumstances through a providential adaptation of the fecundity of the human species to the exigencies

of society. Marx had, of course, no wish to justify the ways of Providence, but he had a keen desire to discredit the ways of capitalism, and so he devoted more than a hundred pages to arguing that "there is a law of population peculiar to the capitalist mode of production;"* that "capitalist accumulation itself constantly produces, in the direct ratio of its own energy and extent, a relatively redundant population of labourers—*i.e.*, a population of greater extent than suffices for the average needs of the self-expansion of capital, and therefore a surplus population;"† or, in still other words, that "the labouring population produces, along with the accumulation of capital produced by it, the means by which itself is made relatively superfluous, and does this to an always increasing extent." ‡

Unfortunately Marx forgot that such a law, and the statements which he made in support of it, could only be established by statistics and an adequate induction of relevant facts, not by mere general reasoning and assertion. The only statistical data, however, which he submits to us—those in the note on p. 544 (Engl. tr.)—are ludicrously irrelevant and insufficient. Out of the census reports of 1851 and 1861 he selected fourteen industries which showed either a decrease or only a slight increase in the number of labourers employed, and said not a word concerning over 400 other industries. But, of course, what he required to prove was not that there had been a diminution of labourers in some departments of industry, but that there had been a general and growing diminution of industrial labourers. He was bound to establish the prevalence of a law; the operation of an essential and inevitable tendency. Manifestly his statistics do nothing of the kind.

Nowhere, indeed, throughout his lengthened argumentation does Marx deal even with the facts which bear most directly on his hypothesis. From beginning to end his method in the hundred pages which I have specially in view is one of fallacious dogmatic ratiocination. It consists in inferring what the facts must be on the assumption that capitalistic accumulation is the process of exploitation which it has been described by Marx as being; silently taking for granted that the facts are what they have been inferred to be; and loudly asserting that what was undertaken to be proved has been proved. But the facts have never once been looked in the face; their voices have not been allowed to be heard for an instant. The facts are indubitably not what we are asked to believe them to be. They plainly contradict at every point the hypothesis propounded regarding them.

If, as Marx pretends, the relative magnitude of the constant part of capital is in direct, but that of the variable or wage-paying part of

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* P. 645. † P. 643. ‡ P. 645.

capital is in inverse, proportion to the advance of accumulation; if as capital increases, instead of one-half of its total value, only one-third, one-fourth, one-fifth, one-sixth, one-seventh, etc., is transformed into labour-power, and, on the other hand, two-thirds, three-fourths, five-sixths, seven-eighths, into means of production; if the demand for labour progressively falls in this frightful manner, undoubtedly there must be a correspondingly continuous and progressive diminution of the increase of labourers. But why did it not occur to him to confirm his assertion that there was such a law by showing that there had been such a diminution? Why, instead of doing so, did he content himself with giving us merely the note to which I have already referred? Simply because he could not do any better, and could not deal fairly with the facts without abandoning his hypothesis.

During the last century the increase of the population of Europe amounted to over 200 millions of men. How did this happen if the demand for labour was relatively to the accumulation of wealth, progressively falling in the manner Marx maintained? Were the great mass of these millions born either with silver spoons in their mouths or in the industrial reserve army? In 1841 there were employed in British industries 3,137,000 workers, and in 1881, 4,535,000, showing an increase in their number of about 45 per cent., while during the same period the whole population increased from 26,855,000 to 35,003,000, or only about 30 per cent. A similar progressive increase of labourers took place in all countries under an energetic capitalist and manufacturing régime. Marx himself declared the growth of official pauperism to be the indication and measure of the increase of the industrial reserve army. Pauperism, however, was for nearly half a century steadily decreasing in England, both absolutely and relatively. Whereas in 1855-9 the paupers of England formed 4·7 per cent. of the population, in 1885-9 they formed only 2·8 per cent. of it. In like manner there was no relative increase but a decided relative decrease of able-bodied adults who received temporary assistance owing to want of employment. The "growing mass of consolidated surplus population," of which Marx speaks, did not exist. His hypothesis of an industrial reserve army produced by capitalism for its own advantage, and constantly dragging the labouring class into deeper and more hopeless misery, was fortunately only a distempered dream.

5. The famous Condorcet, in the most celebrated of his works, the "Tableau historique des progrès de l'Esprit Humain," published in 1795, argued that the course of history under a régime of liberty would be towards equality of wealth, as well as towards equality in all other advantages, inasmuch as it would gradually sweep away all those distinctions between men according to their wealth which have been originated by the civil laws and perpetuated by factitious means,

and would leave only such as were rooted in nature. Seventy-four years later we find Marx strenuously contending that when property, trade, and industry were left unfettered, when labour was unprotected, wealth tended irresistibly and with ever increasing rapidity to inequality; the distance between rich and poor continually and with ever growing speed widening, so that only a vast revolution could prevent capitalist society from being soon divided into two great classes: one consisting of a few thousands of moneyed magnates in possession of all the means of production and enjoyment, and the other of many millions of dependent and pauperised proletarians. Which of these views is to be preferred? Whoever impartially and comprehensively studies the actual history of the last hundred years will find no difficulty in answering. He must acknowledge that it has clearly shown Condorcet to have been far-seeing and Marx to have been short-sighted. Freedom in the industrial and commercial sphere has undoubtedly during the last hundred years proved itself to be, on the whole, a most democratic thing, surely and steadily pulling the higher classes of society down to a lower level, surely and steadily raising the lower classes, destroying all fixed class distinctions, moneyed inclusive, and not only greatly increasing the number of intermediate fortunes, but so grading them, and so facilitating their passage from one person to another, as to manifest that liberty really has that tendency to equality, even as regards wealth, for which Condorcet contended.

[A comparison with Prof. Kirkup's "Inquiry into Socialism," Chap. III., "Examination of the Present System," will be found very interesting.]

CHAPTER VI

NATIONALISATION OF THE LAND

SOCIALISM proposes to reconstruct and reorganise society. It has the merit of being not merely critical, but also, in intention at least, constructive. It seeks not simply to pull down, but also to build up; it would pull down only to build up; and it even would, so far as possible, begin to build up before pulling down, in order that society, in passing from its old to its new mode of life, may not for a moment be left houseless.*

It has often been said that Socialism has shown itself much stronger in criticism than in construction. I cannot altogether assent to the statement. Socialism is nowhere weaker, it seems to me, than in its criticism of the chief doctrines of political economy. It is weak all over, because it has not had sufficient critical discernment to apprehend the essential laws of economic life. The leading representatives of Socialism, and especially the founders of the principal early schools of French Socialism, have shown no lack of constructive ingenuity. Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Comte were men of quite exceptional constructive power. They were unsuccessful constructors, not owing to any want of constructive ability, but because they had not a solid foundation of principles on which to construct, and chose some very bad materials with which to construct. Fourier, for example, displayed an extraordinary ingenuity in planning his *phalanges* and *phalanstères*;† but of course it was wasted, for he was trying to accomplish the impossible, believing that he could so alter the conditions of life as to insure every person against requiring to do any hard or disagreeable work, secure to him eight meals a day, and provide him in abundance with all known pleasures, and even with many peculiar to the new era of existence.

If, however, by saying that Socialists have been more successful in criticism than in construction is merely meant that they have been more successful in pointing out the evils of our present social

[* This statement will be examined in a later chapter.]
[† See Kirkup's "History of Socialism," pp. 31 and 33.]

condition than in indicating efficient remedies for them, the statement is undoubtedly true; but it is true of many others besides Socialists, and is no very severe censure. It is for all of us much easier to trace the existence and operation of social evils than to find the remedies for them; to detect the faults of any actual system of society than to devise another which would be free from them, and free at the same time from other faults as bad or worse. Yet we must not on that account undervalue the criticism of social institutions, or the exposure of what is defective and injurious in them. We shall never cure evils unless we know thoroughly what are the evils we ought to cure. In so far as socialistic criticism is true, in so far as it fixes our attention upon the poverty, misery, and wickedness around us—upon what is weak and wasteful, unjust and pernicious, in the existent constitution of society—and compels us to look at them closely, and to take them fully to heart, so far it does us real service.

But Socialists, as I have said, do not confine themselves to criticism. They make positive constructive proposals. One of these proposals is the subject of the present chapter.

Nationalise the land. Private property in land, it is asserted, is unjust in itself and injurious in its consequences. The land is of right the property of the nation, and in order that the nation may enjoy its right, labour reach its just reward, and pauperism be abolished, what is above all needed is the expropriation of landlords. This is what Henry George, Alfred R. Wallace,* and many others have recommended as a cure for the chief ills under which society is languishing. In early youth, I myself held the views which they maintain, having become acquainted to some extent with a man whose name should not be forgotten in connection with this doctrine—a man of talent, almost a genius, an eloquent writer, as eloquent a talker—Patrick Edward Dove, the author, among other works, of a "Theory of Human Progression" and "Elements of Political Science," in which he advocated the nationalisation of the land ardently and skilfully.

[* The work of Henry George, "Progress and Poverty," is published by Paul, French, Trübner & Co. That of Alfred Russell Wallace, "Land Nationalisation," is published by Swan, Sonnenschein & Co. The cost of each is one shilling. Mr. Blatchford's pamphlet on "Land Nationalisation" is a cheap print issued by the *Clarion Press*. It is published at one penny. It is an excellent specimen of present day socialistic literature.]

No one, perhaps, has more clearly and forcibly argued that the rent-value of the soil is not the creation of the cultivator, nor of the landlord, but of the whole labour of the country, and, therefore, should be allocated to the nation; that this would allow of the abolition of all customs and excise, and the imposition of a single tax of a kind inexpensive to collect; that it would unite the agricultural and manufacturing classes into one common interest, and would secure to every labourer his share of the previous labour of the community, etc. I have long ceased, however, to believe in land nationalisation as a panacea for social misery.*

I deny that individual property in land is unjust, and, consequently, that justice demands the nationalisation of land. It is necessary, however, to explain precisely what I understand by this denial.

I do not mean by it, then, that an individual may justly claim an absolute proprietorship in land, an unlimited right alike to use or to abuse land. Nay, I wholly disbelieve that any man can possibly acquire a right to such absolute proprietorship in anything.

All human rights of proprietorship are limited—and limited in two directions—limited both by the law of perfect duty, and the legitimate claims of our fellow-men; or, as the Theist and Christian may prefer to say, by the rights of God, and by the rights of society. If we have an absolute right to anything, it would seem that it must be to our own lives; yet we have no absolute right to them. We are morally bound to sacrifice our lives, whenever a great cause, whenever God's service, demands the sacrifice. Thus without an absolute right of property even in our own selves, we can still less have an absolute right of property in anything else. By no labour or price can we purchase an absolute right in anything, and so, of course, not in land. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." If these words are true (and Socialists often quote them as true),

* Thomas Spence, Fergus O'Connor, Ernest Jones, Bronterre O'Brien, and others, had preceded Dove in maintaining that land should cease to be held as private property. The first-mentioned advocated, as early as 1775, the *parochialising* of all the land of the nation, "so that there shall be no more nor other landlords in the whole country than the parishes; and each of them be sovereign landlord of its own territories." See the "Lecture of Thomas Spence, bookseller, read at the Philosophical Society in Newcastle on November 8th, 1775, for printing of which the Society did the author the honour to expel him," reprinted and edited, with notes and introduction, by H. M. Hyndman, London, 1882.

most certainly no man can reasonably regard himself as the absolute proprietor of any portion of the earth; but just as certainly can no man reasonably regard himself as the absolute proprietor of any portion of its fulness, or even of his own limbs, faculties, or life. In the strict or absolute sense there is but one Proprietor in the universe. No man's proprietorship is more than tenancy and stewardship.*

But our rights of property in land, as in everything else, being thus necessarily subordinate to the sovereignty and limited by the moral law of God, cannot possibly be absolute and unlimited as against society. The individual is a member of society; connected with it in many ways, benefited by it in many ways, indebted to it in many ways, and bound by the laws of morality to seek to promote its good, and, if need be, to sacrifice his personal interests to the general welfare. He can have no rights which are in contradiction to his duties, no rights to do wrong to society, or even to do nothing for society. On the contrary, the society of which he is a member, to which he owes so much, by which his property is protected, and from which it is even largely derived, has obvious claims on him and his property; and may most righteously insist on their fulfilment. There is no reason why any exception should be made, or favour shown, in respect to property in land. Nay, as the welfare of a people is even more affected by property in land than in personalty, the State may reasonably be expected to guard with special care against abuses of it, and to insist on its being held and administered only under such conditions as are consistent with, and conducive to, the general good.

Yet Socialists continually argue against the private ownership of land on the supposition that individual proprietors of land must be allowed an unlimited right of abusing their position. They think it relevant, for example, to adduce instances of landlords who have exercised the power which proprietorship gave them in interfering with the religious and the political freedom of their tenants. But manifestly the proper inference to be drawn from

* Socialists often quote merely the words "the earth is the Lord's," and then infer that they condemn *private property in land.* If they quoted the whole sentence every person must at once perceive that what it teaches is that there is an absolute divine proprietorship, not of land only, but of all that the earth contains, to the law of which all other proprietorship, whether individual or collective, ought to be subordinated.

such facts is, not that landlordism is in itself an evil, but simply that landlords who venture to act the part of despots in a free country should be punished, and compelled to pay due respect to the constitution of the country in which they live. No right of property in land would be violated should a landlord who persisted in interfering with either the religious or the civil liberties of his fellow-subjects be expropriated without compensation.

Then, if the right of property in land is only a relative and conditioned right, what meaning or force is there in the argument so often and so confidently employed that private property in land must be unjustifiable, because otherwise were a man rich enough to buy an English county he would be entitled to make a wilderness of his purchase, and to sow it with thorns, thistles, or salt; or even were he rich enough to buy up the world he would be entitled to prosecute all its other inhabitants as trespassers, or to serve them with writs of eviction? It would be just as reasonable to argue that a man rich enough to buy up all the pictures of Raphael, Titian, and Rembrandt, or all the copies of Homer and the Bible, Dante and Shakespeare, would be entitled to burn them all, and that, therefore, there should be no private property in pictures or books.

Proudhon wrote his celebrated treatise on property to prove that property, meaning thereby the absolute right to use and to abuse a thing, is theft; and he occupied about a third of it in contending that property is impossible; that there neither is, has been, nor can be such a thing as property: that property is not itself, but a negation, a lie, nothing. He has no less than ten elaborate arguments to this effect. His book was extremely clever, but admirably adapted to make a fool of the public. No elaborate reasoning is needed to convince reasonable men that property understood as it was by Proudhon, if it were possible, would be theft; or that if society allows such theft—allows rights of property in land, or in anything else, which are clearly anti-social, plainly injurious to the community—it is foolish, and forgetful of its duty.*

* The argumentation of Mr. Herbert Spencer (see "Social Statics," ch. ix.) against the legitimacy of private property proceeds, like that of Proudhon, very largely on the assumption that *a right to do right implies a right to do wrong*: that *a right to use carries with it a right to abuse*. Mr. Spencer may or may not have been conscious of making this assumption. He

I do not maintain, then, that the individual ownership of land is an absolute or unlimited right. I do not even maintain it to be an essential or necessary right. It is not the only form of property in land which may be just. It has been generally, if not always, preceded by tribal or communal ownership, and it may be succeeded by collective or national ownership. It may be limited, conditioned, modified in various ways, according to the changing requirements of time and circumstance. What I hold in regard to it is simply this, that in itself, and apart from abuses, it is not unjust, but, on the contrary, as just as any other kind of individual property, or even as any other kind of property, individual or collective.

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has certainly not shown that he was entitled to make it. When, therefore, he infers that "a claim to private property in land involves a land-owning despotism," that if men have a right to make the soil private property "it would be proper for the sole proprietor of any kingdom—a Jersey or Guernsey, for example—to impose just what regulations he might choose on its inhabitants, to tell them that they should not live on his property unless they professed a certain religion, spoke a particular language, paid him a specified reverence, adopted an authorised dress, and conformed to all other conditions he might see fit to make," and the like, he only makes manifest the absurdity latent in an assumption of his own.

It is from "the law of equal freedom" that Mr. Spencer deduces "the injustice of private property." If each man "has freedom to do all that he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other, then each of them is free to use the earth for the satisfaction of his wants provided he allows all others the same liberty. And, conversely, it is manifest that no one may use the earth in such a way as to prevent the rest from similarly using it; seeing that to do this is to assume greater freedom than the rest, and consequently to break the law."

Mr. Spencer overlooked that "the law of equal freedom" only confers an equal right to try, but not an equal right to succeed. It entitles every man to try to become Prime Minister, but it does not forbid only one man becoming Prime Minister. And as to land, not only is it not "manifest," but it is manifestly ridiculous "that no one may use the earth in such a way as to prevent the rest from similarly using it." If any man uses a field for agricultural purposes or a portion of ground to build a house on it, he necessarily prevents all other people from similarly using it.

Mr. Spencer, it is proper to add, ceased to believe in either the equity or the expediency of land-nationalisation, for reasons which will be found stated in "Justice," Appendix B. ed. 1891.

Proudhon defines property as "le droit d'user et d'abuser," *the right to use and to abuse*, and holds that the phrase *jus utendi et abutendi* in the definition of property in the "Pandects" may be so translated (see his "De la Propriété," ch. ii.). The interpretation is, however, undoubtedly erroneous. Says M. Ortolan in a well-known work, published long before Proudhon's, "Il faut bien se garder d'attribuer, dans la langue du droit romain, à ce mot *abuti*, l'idée qu'il emporte dans notre langue, c'est-à-dire d'un usage immodéré, déraisonnable, condamnable. *Abuti*, par sa décomposition étymologique elle-même (*ab* particule privative, et *uti* user) désigne un emploi de la chose qui en fait cesser, qui en detruit, l'usage. Tel est l'effet de l'aliénation, de la consummation de la chose" ("Tableau historique des Instituts," t. i. pp. 253-4).

In order to establish the legitimacy of collective property in land, the illegitimacy of individual property in land is affirmed. But the connection between the one contention and the other is far from obvious. On the contrary, it is difficult to see how collective property in land can be right if individual property in land is necessarily wrong. If a tribe of savages may appropriate a portion of unowned territory as a hunting-ground, surely an individual man may with as much justice appropriate a portion of unowned land through occupying and cultivating it—or rather with more, as he has done more to the land. The title of savages to the land over which they roam is often a weak and questionable one, just because they have never really appropriated, cultivated, used it. The aborigines of Australia were hardly more entitled to be called the proprietors of Australia than were the kangaroos of Australia, for they had only, like the kangaroos, wandered up and down in it. If any individual among them had made something like a garden of any portion of Australian soil, his title to that piece of ground would have been much superior to that of his tribe to the hundreds of miles over which its members sought for their food.

It has never been shown that national property in land has any better foundation than individual property in land. A nation generally gets its land by occupation and conquest, and if these are good titles for it they are good titles for individuals. Purchase and cultivation as modes of appropriation are better than these, and individual property is more frequently acquired than national property by them. The titles of the Norman followers of William the Conqueror to the lordship of English lands may have been morally far from good, but they were as good as William's own to the lordship of England; the right of the Norman individual was as good as that of the Norman state. If individual property in land then is unjust, we shall not escape from injustice by taking refuge in national property in land; for it must be equally or more unjust, seeing that it rests on the same or on weaker grounds, and has been effectuated in the same or in worse ways. The only mode of escape from the alleged injustice must be to allow of no property in land; to have all land unappropriated, free, and open to all. But this would render land useless, or nearly so. If everybody is to have the same right to it nobody will get any good out of it. The earth, however, can hardly have been designed to be useless.

If, as Socialists frequently remind us, God has made it for the good of all, He cannot have so given it to all that it could benefit none. And certainly it is only through land becoming the property of some that it can become profitable to all, or indeed of almost any use to any.

It cannot reasonably be doubted that individual property in land was a decided advance and improvement on any of the forms of collective property in land which preceded it. It would not otherwise have everywhere displaced them in progressive societies; it would not otherwise have uniformly accompanied the growth of civilisation. The collective tenure of land was once the general rule; now it is the rare exception. Why? Because it was an economically feeble and defective system; because it cramped freedom, depressed energy, limited production, could not supply the wants of a large population, and hindered the accumulation of capital.

None of the objections against private property in land appear to me to be of any real force. Some argue thus: No man has made the earth or given to it its natural powers, and therefore no man is entitled to appropriate it and its powers to his own exclusive use, nor to exact from another compensation for their use. Were this argument good no natural agent whatever could be justly appropriated, and all industry would be wrong, all production of wealth sinful. One man takes a piece of wood and makes it into a bow and arrows, to kill the creatures which are to serve him as sustenance; another takes a piece of ground, clears it, cleans it, digs it, plants in it the seeds of trees and herbs which will yield him food. In what respect is the latter less entitled to be left in undisturbed possession of the piece of land which he has made useful than the former of the piece of wood which he has made useful? In none. The natural qualities of the wood were as much the creation of God and His free gift to man as the natural powers of the soil; the soil not less than the wood has in the process of appropriation been converted from a natural and useless into an artificial and useful thing; and the men who have respectively so changed the wood and the soil have both justly become the owners of them, and are entitled either to keep them for their own use or to lend the use of them to others for a compensation. Agricultural land is very rarely the pure gift of nature; it is almost

always an artificial and manufactured article. It is often an instrument of production most expensive to make, and generally also one most expensive to maintain in efficiency. Hence in any advanced stage of civilisation none except capitalists can be the proprietors of it without injury and injustice to the community.

Land, it is likewise often argued, so differs from other things that it ought not to be made property of like other things. As it is limited in amount, and the quantity of it cannot be increased, the ownership of it, we are told, is a monopoly to which no individual can be entitled. This is a very common yet a very weak argument. Only things which are limited are made property of; what is unlimited, or practically so, is not worth appropriating. Political economy does not concern itself about things the supply of which is unlimited. There is no social question as to the use of such things. But what articles of value are unlimited? None. What natural agents needing to be taken into account in the production of wealth are unlimited? None. Stone, coal, iron, wood, etc., are all as limited as the surface of the ground. Limitation is a condition of all wealth, not a distinctive peculiarity of wealth in the form of land. That land is limited is the very reason why there is property in land. It is no reason for concluding that property in land must be an unjust monopoly, or a monopoly at all. Those who affirm that it is, merely show that they do not know what a monopoly is. If every man is free to go into the sugar trade, selling sugar is not a monopoly, although the quantity of sugar in the world is not unlimited. In like manner, the limited amount of land cannot make property in land a monopoly, provided there is, as there ought to be, free trade in land.

Another argument against private property in land, and one which is much relied on by most advocates of land nationalisation, is based on the fact that the value of land is largely due to the general labour and growth of wealth of the community. It is not only what the landlord does to his land which gives it the value represented by its rent. A piece of ground in the centre of London is of enormous value, not because of anything which its owner has done to it, but because of the industry and wealth of London. The socialistic inference is that a proprietor cannot justly profit by what thus owes its existence to the community; that the "unearned increment" derived from social labour, or general social causes

and "conjunctures," should of right return to society. But here, again, it is overlooked that what is alleged is not more true of land than of other things; that all prices are as dependent as rents of land on the general labour and prosperity of the community; that if land in the centre of London rents high, it is because houses there rent high; and that if houses there rent high, it is because a vast amount of business is done in them.

It is not only the owners of land in London who profit by the industry and prosperity of London, but also its professional men, merchants, tradesmen, and labourers. All of them, when times are good, when "conjunctures" are favourable, receive "unearned increments," as well as the landowners; all of them are in the same way indebted to the community. The large incomes of London physicians and London merchants, compared with those of physicians and merchants of equal ability in provincial towns, are as much due to an unearned increment as the high rents of the owners of the ground on which London is built. If the people of London are rightfully entitled to the unearned increment in the rents of its ground-proprietors, they are entitled also to the unearned increment in the fees, salaries, and profits of all classes of its citizens.

That they are entitled to it in any case has yet to be proved. That there is any way of exactly separating unearned from earned increment, and justly apportioning it among those who have contributed to produce it, has yet to be shown. That a city or nation can have any better claim to it than an individual has never been made out, and is even clearly incapable of being made out. For the value of land in London, for example, depends not only on the wealth of London, but on the wealth of England, and the wealth of England depends on the wealth of the world, on the labour, production, and abstinence of the world. If, therefore, the argument under consideration were valid, the British nation ought in justice to hand over to other nations no inconsiderable portion of the unearned increment included in the wealth of its members.

The rise and fall of the rents of land, then, depend on the labour and good or bad fortune of society, just as the rise and fall of all other rents, of all prices, and of all values. There is nothing special or peculiar in the mode of their increase or the

course of their movement which can warrant society in treating them in an exceptional way, and to deal with property in land differently from all other property.

Easily proved as this truth is, and amply proved although it has often been, enthusiastic advocates of land-nationalisation, like the late Henry George and Alfred R. Wallace, cannot afford to acknowledge it. They have founded their whole system on the assumption that land alone, or almost alone, increases in value with the increase of population and wealth, and that in virtue of this law the landowners of a country by simply raising rents can and do appropriate all that labour and capital contribute to the production of national wealth.

The assumption is altogether arbitrary, and undoubtedly contrary to fact. The man who can believe that land is in this country the exclusively, or even a specially, remunerative kind of property; that the want of it is a necessary and chief cause of poverty, and the possession of it the infallible and abundant source of wealth, displays a remarkable power of adhering to a prepossession in defiance of its contradiction by experience. Is there any kind of property which increases less in value in Britain than land? It is known not to have doubled in value during the last ninety years. It has certainly diminished considerably in value during the last thirty-five years. There is no apparent probability of any relatively great or rapid rise in its value in the future. The vast increase of the national income, since, say, 1820, has been almost wholly derived from property other than land. It is not the rule but the exception to make large fortunes, either by speculating in land, or cultivating land. The notion that the landowners are appropriating all the wealth of the nation, and keeping the other classes of society in poverty, can be entertained by no man of unprejudiced mind who is acquainted with the mass of evidence to the contrary accumulated by the recent researches of scientific economists and statisticians.

It has to be added that the connection of the individual with society is for the owners of land, as for other persons, the source of *undeserved decrements* as well as of *unearned increments*. This fact the advocates of land-nationalisation strangely overlook, or unjustly ignore. They seem to think the conjuncture of social circumstances, the incalculable operation of social causes, only

brought gain and wealth to the possessors of land; whereas, in reality, it as often brings to them loss and poverty. Riches sometimes flow in upon them, as upon other men, owing to the condition and fortune of the community; but from the same cause their riches as frequently "take to themselves wings and flee away." If, therefore, the State is, on the plea of justice, to appropriate landowners' increments so far as not individually earned, it must also become responsible for their decrements so far as socially produced. For society to seize on the socially caused increment, yet not to restore the socially caused decrement, in individual incomes, would be a manifestly unjust and unfair procedure. Those who have recommended it in regard to the rents of land have been influenced by a false theory, and have neither looked calmly nor comprehensively at the subject. They have seen only one side of the shield. They have gazed so eagerly at the coveted increments as wholly to overlook the decrements, though equally real. Now, suppose that the British Government, about the year 1870, in the belief that landowners only benefit by their connection with society, had agreed to appropriate their unearned increments, but on condition of making up for their decrements not due to their own mismanagement, should there be any: would not the bargain have been a wretched one for the British people during the twenty years which followed? Why, they would have had decrements everywhere, year after year, and increments nowhere. In some of these years, instead of being entitled to get anything from great landowners, like, for instance, the late Duke of Bedford, they would have had to give them fifty per cent.

Instead of being either foolish or unjust, it is really both the wisest and the justest policy which the State can pursue, not to attempt the impossible task of separating the social or unearned from the individual or earned portions in the incomes of any class of its citizens, but to leave them both to enjoy the gains and to bear the losses which their connection with the nation involves.

For having thus argued at such length that justice does not demand the nationalisation of the land of the country, my excuse must be that so many persons are at present loudly asserting the contrary, and endeavouring to make it appear that private property in land is morally wrong, and that to expropriate landowners without compensation would be an innocent or a virtuous act.

I do not maintain that to nationalise the land would be in itself unjust. If private property in land may be just, so may national or collective property be. What I fail to see is how national or collective property in land can be just, if private or individual property therein must necessarily be unjust. Nationalisation of the land would be quite just if the present proprietors were bought out, and if men were left not less free than they are at present to purchase the use of the land in fair competition. It is quite possible to conceive of a kind of nationalisation of the land which would not interfere with the liberty of individuals in regard to the possession or tenure of land, and which would consequently not be Socialism at all in the sense in which I employ the term. Could it be shown that to nationalise the land by the national purchase and administration of it would be clearly for the good of the nation, I should have no hesitation in advocating its nationalisation.

The present proprietors could in justice only demand for their land its fair market value. They may have in theory a right to the possession of it for all eternity; but this is not a right which will entitle or enable them to get more for it in fact than a sum equal to between twenty and thirty annual rents. They could reasonably claim from the State, supposing the nationalisation of the land was resolved on, only its ordinary selling price. But this they could with perfect justice claim; this could not honestly be refused to them. To maintain the contrary is to advocate theft. The proposal of Mr. George and his followers to appropriate the rent of land by throwing on it all public burdens is a suggestion to theft of the meanest kind; to theft which knows and is ashamed of itself, and tries to disguise itself under the name and in the form of taxation. The State which adopts it will only add hypocrisy to theft.

The proposal also often put forward of late that, on due intimation, property in land should be appropriated by the State without compensation, when present owners die, or after the lapse of twenty or thirty years' possession, is likewise one of flagrant dishonesty. Imagine three men: one invests his money in land, the second buys house-property, the third acquires bank-shares. Can any good reason be given why the capital of the first alone is, either at his death or after thirty years, to go to the nation, while that of the other two is to remain their own however long they

may live and at their death to go to their heirs ? Or is it in the least probable that a State unprincipled enough thus to appropriate the capital invested in land would long scruple to appropriate any kind of investments ? There must be a radical change in the primary moral apprehensions and judgments of men before proposals such as these can be generally regarded as other than immoral.

If the nation, then, would become the sole proprietor of the land of the country, it must first buy out the present landowners. Any other course would be unjust. No other course is possible except through violence, revolution, and civil war. But buying out the landowners would be a very foolish and unprofitable financial transaction for the nation. It could only be effected at a cost of about two thousand millions ; the interest on which would amount to more than the net return of the land, which is in this country from 2 to 2½ per cent. It would not be, perhaps, an impossible financial operation, but it would certainly be a very difficult one ; and it would divert an enormous amount of capital from profitable spheres of employment, would necessarily increase taxation, and would tend not to any improvement in the condition of farmers, but to rack-renting. I shall not, however, occupy the space still at my disposal in showing that land-nationalisation accomplished by purchase would be a very disadvantageous investment of national capital, because this has often been unanswerably shown, and can hardly be said to have been ever seriously contested. Socialists themselves—all of them, at least, except credulous believers in the power of the State to work industrial and economical miracles—do not deny it. On the contrary, it is just because they cannot help admitting it, cannot fail to see that land-nationalisation by purchase would be a case where honesty would not pay, that they are forced to advocate schemes of land-nationalisation by open or disguised confiscation that are distinctly dishonest.

The nationalisation of the land has been advocated as a solution of the social question. By the solution of a question is meant an answer to it, a settlement of it. But the nationalisation of the land would answer no social question, would settle none. It would only raise in a practical form the question, What is the nation to do with the land ? Only when this question is settled, or practically answered in a satisfactory manner, will ever the land question

be solved. But the slightest reflection will show that the question which would arise as to how the land when nationalised ought to be made use of must prove an extremely difficult one to answer aright. Those who, like the great majority of the advocates of land-nationalisation, merely expatiate in a general way on the advantages which they conceive would flow from the measure, avoiding to state and explain what system of land administration they would substitute for that which at present prevails, must be regarded as vague thinkers and empty talkers, yet none the less likely on that account to influence dangerously the ignorant and the inconsiderate.

The nation might deal in various ways with the land which it nationalised. It might, for example, proceed forthwith to de-nationalise it by creating a new class of proprietors, say, peasant proprietors. But one can hardly suppose that it would be so inconsistent as thus to stultify itself. The socialistic arguments against property should be as applicable to private property on a small as on a large scale. Buying out one class of proprietors in order to put in another class would be an obviously absurd procedure. The new proprietors could hardly expect other classes of the nation to pay, merely for their benefit, the interest of the enormous debt incurred in buying out the old proprietors. These classes might justly, and no doubt would, look to them to pay it. But peasant proprietors, and, indeed, any class of proprietors so burdened, could never maintain themselves and prosper. Still less could they pay a land-tax additional to that required to yield a sum equivalent to the interest of the debt incurred by the State in the purchase of the land. Yet what Socialists aim at is to impose such a tax on land as will render every other species of taxation unnecessary. This method, then, would neither satisfy any principle of those who contend for land nationalisation nor serve any desirable end. The proprietors of the new system would be in a far worse position than the farmers of the old; the use of the land would be restricted to a class as exclusively as before; and the only change in the relation of the State or nation to the land would be its liability for the enormous debt incurred by its purchase.

The State might also let the land when nationalised to tenant-farmers. This is the plan which, were all private ownership of

land abolished, would produce least change in the agricultural economy of the country, and which the Government could follow with least trouble and most sense of security. Hence it is the plan which has found most favour with those who advocate land-nationalisation.

But how, then, would the rents be determined? If by competition, Socialism, which professes to set aside competition, would be untrue to itself in conforming to it. While rents would not be lowered, the general community would be as much shut out from enjoyment of the land as it now is, and the expenses of the Government so increased by the management of it as largely to deduct from the rent. If, on the other hand, the rents should be fixed otherwise than by competition, and in accordance with some truly socialistic principle, a just and equitable principle of the kind has yet to be discovered. It is as impossible, apart from competition, to determine what are fair rents as what are fair wages.

If fixed otherwise they would have to be fixed lower than competition would determine, in order that the farmers might not be aggrieved and driven to resistance. But the more they were thus lowered the greater would be the wrong done to the rest of the community, which instead of being benefited by the return from the land would be burdened with an increased measure of the debt on the land. If, then, the changes required by this plan are comparatively slight, the advantages which could reasonably be expected from it are equally slight. The condition of farmers would not be improved; the condition of agricultural labourers would not be improved; the condition of the general community would be rendered much worse, as it would be placed in the position of a landlord, the rental of whose land fell far short of the interest of the debt on it.

Private landowners, indeed, would be got rid of, and the members and agents of the Government would take their places. But would this be of real advantage? In all probability it would be the reverse. A democratic Government represents only that political party in a country which happens for the time to command the largest number of votes. As it will not be long in power unless its budgets are of a popular and cheerful kind, it would be very impolitic to spend, as great private landowners have done,

vast sums in agricultural experiments which might not prove financially successful, or in improvements which could bear fruit only in a somewhat distant future. Yet unless this were done the land and agriculture of a nation would not prosper, but would rapidly deteriorate. Thus the agents of a modern democratic Government, or, in other words, of a party Government which represents merely an unstable political majority, cannot but have far too much interest in immediate returns and far too little in the permanent amelioration of the soil, to make good land-administrators.

It is generally recognised, by those who have studied the subject, that were the soil of a country left entirely to the management of any class of mere farmers it would soon be seriously deteriorated, if not utterly ruined. Hence probably, in the case of the land being nationalised, it would be found expedient to allow the occupiers of land under the State fixity of tenure and judicial rents, or, in other words, a virtual proprietary right and a monopolistic privilege. But this state of things would certainly be neither more just nor more profitable to the general community, and especially to the labouring classes, than the system which at present prevails.

It is unnecessary to discuss either the proposal that the State should restore agricultural village communities or that it should create agricultural co-operative associations. In exceptional circumstances both the agricultural village community and the agricultural co-operative society might, perhaps, be established with good results under the fostering care and guidance of a sagacious, generous, and wealthy individual; but the former has so many economic defects, and the success of the latter implies so many favourable contingencies not likely to be found in conjunction, that no prudent Government will feel itself warranted in spending any considerable sum of public money in calling them into existence. No person in this country, so far as I am aware, has been so unwise as to contend that the land should be nationalised with a view to a general adoption of either of these forms of rural economy.*

* I fear that in this paragraph I have under-estimated the unwisdom of the English Land Restoration League. At least, one of its "Tracts," written by a well-known literary exponent of Socialism, J. Morrison Davidson,

Still another method, however, might be adopted, and it is the one which would unquestionably be most consistent with the principles of Socialism. The State might take into its own hands the whole management of the whole land of the country. It might organise agriculture, as it does the art of war, by the formation of armies of industry, superintended and guided by competent officers of labour. Thomas Carlyle, it will be remembered, recommended that "the vagrant chaotic Irish" should be provided with plenty of spade work, formed into regiments under "sternly benignant drill-sergeants," and given suitable pay and rations for their labour. There are Socialists who generalise the suggestion, and talk enthusiastically of organising agriculture and creating armies of agricultural industry after the model of our modern military system.

But, however attractively this scheme may be presented, it is, in reality, one for the introduction of slavery. The desire for freedom must be extinguished before it can be realised. It would degrade the agricultural labourer from the status of a moral being. It would impose a tremendous task and confer a terrible power

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concludes as follows :—"Let us pass at once from feudalism to municipalisation ; vest the site of every town in its Town Council, and of every landward parish in its Parish Council. The land is the birthright of the people. The Free Land Leaguers are trying to hand it over to the capitalists. If they succeed in gulling the electors, the little finger of every new landlord will be thicker than his predecessor's loins, and a long era of suffering—the capitalist era—as fatal as that inaugurated by the Norman Conquest, will be the result.

"*Nota Bene.*—The first man who, having enclosed a plot of ground, took upon himself to say 'This is mine!' and found people silly enough to believe him, was the real founder of civil society. How many crimes, how many wars, how many murders, how much misery would have been spared the human race, if some one, tearing up the fence and filling in the ditch, had cried out to his fellows, 'Give no heed to this impostor ; you are lost if you forget that the produce belongs to all, the land to none.'"

Mr. Davidson here simply resuscitates the scheme of Spence—one which, had it been acted upon before the Napoleonic wars, would inevitably have resulted in Britain becoming a French island. He overlooks that it is not in any proper sense a scheme for *nationalising land*, but for *denationalising a country, dismembering a nation ;* and also that land, in so far as it is municipalised or parochialised, must also necessarily be, in so far, "enclosed." He has not deemed it necessary to ask himself whether the land even of a parish, if without a fence or a ditch, and the property of nobody, would produce much for anybody, or anything for all. Very possibly, however, he is right in thinking that "enclosing a plot of ground" had a good deal to do with founding civil society ; and, unquestionably, "tearing up all fences and filling in all ditches" would be a very effective means of bringing it down. His *Nota Bene* shows that he has been unguardedly drinking the wine of Rousseau, which is of a very intoxicating character.

on the State. It would enormously increase the temptations to corruption both of rulers and of ruled in connection with the appointment of officers of labour. Politically, therefore, it would be a retrograde and pernicious system. And economically, also, it would be faulty in the extreme. In order to be efficient it would require to be most expensive, and would consequently involve a constant drain of capital from manufactures and commerce to agriculture. The expense of adequately officering an army of agricultural labourers would necessarily far exceed the expense of officering an army of soldiers, as the difficulty of effective supervision is vastly greater; yet even in the case of the latter the cost of officering is, I understand, not less than half the entire cost.

The nationalisation of the land, I may add, would not answer, but only raise, the question, How is the nation, as sole proprietor of the land and its produce, to act in relation to foreign trade? It is a difficult question for the Socialist. If the State engages in and encourages foreign trade it will fail to get free of the competition which Socialists denounce, and it must conform its agricultural policy to that of its competitors. If it sets itself against it, it will be unable to feed a large population, and must be content to rule a poor and feeble nation. The land of Great Britain cannot yield food to one-fifth of the people of Great Britain. In order that Britain may retain her place among the nations, it is absolutely necessary that her vast urban and manufacturing population should have cheap food, and therefore that the cultivators of the land should not receive high prices for its produce.

The nationalisation of the land, then, is not demanded by justice, and would not be a solution of the social problem. Its nationalisation on socialistic principles would be contrary to justice and incompatible with social prosperity.*

[* As the late Mr. Gladstone said, "If you mean to pay for it, it is folly; if you don't mean to pay for it, it is robbery."]

CHAPTER VII

THE COLLECTIVISATION OF CAPITAL

THE proposal to nationalise the land may seem sufficiently bold, and it is certainly one which it would be difficult to carry into practice. Yet it obviously does not go nearly far enough to satisfy socialistic demands and expectations. The collectivisation of capital is, from the socialistic point of view, a far more thorough and consistent scheme. Those who advocate it propose to do away with all private property in the means of production. They would have the State to expropriate the owners not only of land but of all machines, tools, raw materials, ships, railways, buildings, stocks, etc.; and to appropriate the whole mass of these things for the common good.* They aim at setting aside capitalistic competition in every sphere, substituting for it corporate organisation, and dividing the collective products of all kinds of labour among the workmen according to the quantity and worth of their work. They do not seek, indeed, to destroy or to dispense with capital; but they contend for the abolition of all private capital, for the transference of all capital from individuals to the State, which would thus become the sole capitalist.

This, it will be perceived, is a truly gigantic scheme. What it contemplates is a tremendous revolution. It is difficult, indeed, even to imagine the amount of change in the constitution and arrangements of society which must follow from making the State not only the sole landlord, but also the sole employer of labour, the sole producer and distributer of commodities, the sole director of the wills and the supplier of the wants of its members.

But must not those who advocate such a scheme be lacking in ability to distinguish between the possible and the impossible? Is

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[* From the programme of the Social Democratic Federation, published in *Justice*, Oct. 26th, 1907, the following is the comprehensive scheme set forth as to private property: "Nationalisation of the Land, Trusts, Railways, Docks, Canals; Public ownership of Gas, Electric Light and Water Supplies, Tramway, Omnibus and other locomotive services, Food and Coal Supply, Lifeboat Service, Hospitals, Dispensaries, Cemeteries and Crematoria, and the Drink Traffic."]

the preliminary objection to it of impracticability not insuperable? One can conceive the wealthier classes of the nation, on pressure of a great necessity, buying out the landowners and nationalising the land. But to suppose that the poorer classes may buy up all the property employed as capital in production, and so create the Collectivist State, is inherently absurd. Those who are without capital cannot acquire by purchase all the capital of those who possess it, so as to transfer it from individuals to the community, unless they are endowed for the occasion with a power of creation *ex nihilo* which has hitherto been denied to human beings. Collectivism, if it is to start with purchase, or, in other words, with the honest acquisition of the capital of individuals, presupposes that a stupendous miracle will be wrought to bring it into existence.

Some Collectivists fancy that they can parry this objection by vague discourse to the effect that society is passing into the Collectivist stage by a natural or necessary process of evolution. They dwell on such facts as the growth of governmental intervention, the extension of the public service and public departments, the absorption of small by large industries, the increase of co-operative enterprise, and the multiplication of limited liability companies, as evidences and phases of a development of individual capitals into collective capital. These facts are plainly, however, nothing of the kind. The association of capitals in large industries, in co-operative societies, in joint-stock companies, is in no case the slightest step towards rendering them not private but public, not individual but common. Associated capitals are not more easily bought up than separate capitals. While, therefore, history does undoubtedly show a process of social evolution which obviously tends to the enlargement of industrial and commercial enterprise through extension of the association of resources and energies, such evolution is essentially different from an evolution towards the realisation of Collectivism. Of the latter kind of evolution there are happily no traces yet visible; nor is there the least probability that capitalists will ever be so foolish as to cast themselves into any stream of evolution which will transfer their property to the community without compensation.*

* In some respects the proposals of Collectivism are obviously at variance with the course of historical development. Says Professor J. S. Nicholson, "Let anyone try to imagine how the business of a great country is to be

The majority of Collectivists, however, do not imagine that the State will or can purchase the property which they desire to see transferred from individuals to the community. They look to its being taken without payment. The real leaders of Collectivism in England—the chiefs of the Social Democratic Federation—do not attempt to conceal that this is what is aimed at. They tell us quite plainly that they are aware that it is most improbable that Collectivism will be established otherwise than by revolution and force; and at the same time that they are determined to work for its establishment.

I shall say nothing as to the morality of this resolution. And it is unnecessary to do more than merely call attention to the short-sightedness and folly of it. What chance could there be of benefit resulting from it? Attempts to realise Collectivism by force are only likely to lead some unhappy and misguided men to outbursts of riot as contemptible as deplorable, and from which they must be themselves the chief sufferers. Were such attempts to become gravely dangerous they would discredit democracy in the eyes of the majority of the community, and cause them to throw themselves for protection into the arms of despotism. It would thus destroy democracy without establishing Socialism. To those who would attempt to reach Collectivism through revolution these words of J. S. Mill are exactly applicable: "It must be acknowledged that those who would play this game on the strength of their own private opinion unconfirmed as yet by any experimental verification—who would forcibly deprive all who have now a comfortable physical existence of their only present means of preserving it, and would brave the frightful bloodshed and misery that would ensue if the attempt was resisted—must have a serene confidence in their own wisdom, on the one hand, and a recklessness of other

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carried on without money and prices, how the value to the society of various species of labour is to be estimated, and how the relative utilities of consumable commodities and transient services are to be calculated, and he will soon discover that the abolition of money would logically end in the abolition of division of labour. This prospect throws a strong light on the claims of the Socialists to base their doctrines on the tendencies of history and the actual processes of evolution, for, as already shown in detail, the principal characteristic of industrial progress has been the continuous extension of the use of money. In reality, however, Socialism is still more vitally opposed to historical development, since it aims at reversing the broadest principle of progress, the continuous substitution, namely, of contract for status." ("Principles of Political Economy," vol. i., p. 433.)

people's sufferings on the other, which Robespierre and Saint-Just, hitherto the typical instances of these united attributes, scarcely came up to."

Suppose, however, Collectivism to be established. Is it probable that it could be maintained? Is it a kind of system which would be likely to endure? No. Its entire character precludes our reasonably entertaining the hope. Collectivists have as false a notion of what social organisation is, or ought to be, as had their socialist predecessors, Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen, and so many others. They conceive of it not as natural, organic, and free, but as artificial, mechanical, and compulsory. They would manipulate and mould society from without into conformity with an ideal of their own imaginations, but to the disregard of its inherent forces and laws, the constitutional tendencies and properties of human nature.

All notions of this kind are foolish; all efforts in this direction can only lead to mischief. Were a man to take it into his head that his body was insufficiently organised, that his stomach decided too much for itself, that his heart took its own way more than it was entitled to, and that various other parts of him were irregular and erratic in their action; and were he to resolve to put an end to this state of anarchy and to let none of his organs act by and for themselves, but to rule them all by his reason alone, the result would be sure speedily to prove a disastrous failure. If the would-be reorganiser of himself survived the experiment, he would be forced to recognise that a larger wisdom than his own ruled even his own body, and that to attempt to substitute his own wisdom for it was folly. But it is precisely this kind of error which Collectivists make, and even a far greater error, inasmuch as a nation is a far more complex and important organism than a single human body.

Were collectivist organisation tried even for a week, the suffering which would ensue would painfully teach us that self-love has not been so deeply planted in human nature in vain; that its benefits far outnumber and outweigh the evils of selfishness, its excess and abuse, although these are neither few nor small; and that if human reason would do anything in the way of organising society aright it must be not by disregarding and contravening, but by studying and conforming itself to the Universal Reason which

accomplishes its great general purposes through the free inte gences, the private affections, the particular interests, and t personal motives of individuals.

As has been often indicated, no council of the wisest men i London, although invested with absolute powers, could feed clothe, lodge, and employ the population of that city, were no mar allowed to act without having their authority, were no competi tion permitted in buying and selling, and were wages and prices prohibited, and some supposed strictly rational determinatior of what labour was to receive and what commodities were to be exchanged for, adopted instead. The problem involved is of a kinc which cannot be solved by the reasoning and calculation, the legislation and administration, even of the wisest and most un controlled rulers: it can only be solved, as it actually is solved, by leaving men free, each to seek his own interest and to attend to his own business, to carry his services or his goods where the rise of wages or of prices shows that they are most wanted, and to withhold them where the fall of wages or of prices warns him that the market is overstocked. Even when this method of freedom and of nature is followed numerous mistakes will occur, but they will be comparatively slight, and those of one man will counteract those of another, while every man's intelligence and energies will be so stimulated by his interest that the general end to be attained, gigantic as it is, will be reached; although few, if any, directly and exclusively strive for it, and many seek merely their own private benefit. But let the collectivist method be tried, and the risk of mistakes will be immensely increased, the provisions which nature has made for their correction will be prevented from operating, the amount of mischief produced by each error will be vastly multiplied, and the faculties and activities of the individuals composing society will be but feebly brought into exercise.*

It is not only a single city, however, but entire nations, like Great Britain, which Collectivists propose to organise on this plan. May we not safely conclude that what they dream of as organisation would be ruinous disorganisation? Those who rule nations when

* The illustration given above has been often used during the last three hundred years. No one, however, so far as I know, has presented it so clearly and fully, or shown in so interesting a way what it implies, as Archbishop Whately in his "Introductory Lectures on Political Economy," Lecture IV.

the laws of human nature are suppressed and set aside, as Collectivism requires, ought to be not mortal men but immortal gods, or at least beings endowed with altogether superhuman attributes.

Let us now look at Collectivism in itself. It presents itself as the remedy for a grievous evil. The evil is that at present very many workmen are merely workmen, and consequently work under great disadvantages. The materials on which they work, the instruments with which they work, and all the wealth employed as capital in connection with their work, belong to others. Hence they are in a dependent and insecure position, have no voice in the direction of their work, obtain a comparatively small portion of its products, and are liable to be thrown out of employment and reduced to pauperism and misery.

But if such be the evil, surely those who would cure it should make use of measures to lessen it, and so strive towards ultimately abolishing it; in other words, one would expect them to originate, encourage, and aid all schemes and efforts which tend to make the labourers capitalists as well as workmen. Is this what Collectivists do? Not in the least; the very opposite. They propose to cure the evil by universalising it; by depriving every workman of his tools, by leaving him not a bit of private property or a shilling of capital to be employed in production, and by giving him, so far as I can perceive, no voice in the direction of his labour except a vote in the choice of his taskmasters.

In a word, this so-called solution of the social problem is national slavery. The State becomes sole proprietor, its officials omnipotent, all others absolutely dependent on them, dependent for the very means of existence, without any powers of resistance to tyranny, without any individual resources, with no right to choose their work or to choose how to do it, but commanded and ruled in a wholly military manner. Were the end aimed at the putting of an effective stop to the singing of "Britons never shall be slaves," Collectivism would have to be admitted to be admirably contrived; but as a scheme for removing the evils of which Collectivists justly enough complain it is singularly absurd. Its whole tendency is to multiply and intensify these evils.

Of course, Collectivists protest against the imputation of wishing to introduce slavery. And I do not impute to them the wish. People often do the opposite of what they wish. My charge is

that if they establish Collectivism they will introduce slavery, whether they wish to do it or not. How, then, do they repel this charge that Collectivism is slavery, or necessarily implies it? It is by declaring that they desire only to appropriate the means and to regulate the operations of production, but that they will leave every one free as regards consumption. Labour and capital must be collective; but each individual may spend as he pleases what he receives as his share of the collective product, provided always that he does not employ it productively.

And this is supposed to be an answer, and one so satisfactory that no other need be given. If so, however, there never has been such a being as a slave in the world. Slavery is not forced enjoyment or consumption, but forced labour and production. Collectivism, therefore, only offers us what avowed slavery itself cannot withhold.

The reply plainly does not meet the objection so far as production is concerned. It leaves it intact to the extent that men as labourers, as producers, are to be without any freedom of choice or contract; that every man is to be absolutely dependent on the State so far as earning a livelihood is concerned; that the officers of the State are to assign to all its subjects what they are to do to gain their bread and to determine what amount of bread they are to get for what they do. But this is itself abject slavery, to which no man of independent mind would submit so long as there was in the world a free country to which he could escape.

Then, what guarantees have Collectivists to give us that men would be as free as they ought to be even as regards consumption, that is, spending and enjoying what they have earned? None. The Collectivist State would be the sole producer, and every individual would have to take just what it pleased to produce. At present demand rules supply; in the collectivist system supply would rule demand. The State might have the most capricious views as to what people should eat or drink, how they should dress, what books they should read, and the like; and being the sole producer and distributer of meat and drink, the sole manufacturer of cloth and sole tailoring and dressmaking establishment, the sole publisher and supplier of books, individuals would have to submit to all its caprices. The promised freedom of enjoyment or consumption would thus, in all probability, be very slight and illusory.

Were all powers concentrated in the State as Collectivism proposes, the temptation to abuse these powers would be enormous. The mere fact, for example, that all printing and publishing would be done by the State could hardly fail to be fatal to the freedom of the press. Were Secularists in power they could not consistently encourage the circulation of works of devotion or of religious propagandism. If Christians held office they would naturally regard the publication of writings hostile to their religion as also contrary to the welfare of the community. The Collectivist State would not be likely either to import books adverse to Collectivism, nor to treat the production of them by its own subjects as labour worthy of remuneration. So of all things else. If production was entirely in the hands of the State, the liberty of individuals as to consumption could not fail to be unjustly and injuriously limited in every direction. Where supply rules demand, not demand supply, desires must be suppressed or unsatisfied, freedom unknown, and progress impossible.

The Collectivist, I may add, is bound to justify his procedure in allowing a right of property in the objects of consumption and denying it in the instruments of production. It is not enough merely to draw the distinction; it is necessary also to show that the distinction rests on a valid moral principle. This has not been shown, and, I believe, cannot be shown. To affirm that a carriage may legitimately be private property but that a plough cannot, that for an individual to possess the former is right, and what the State cannot hinder without tyranny, while to possess the latter is wrong, and what the State must on no account permit, seems at least to be a paradox devoid both of reason and justice. Why do Collectivists not endeavour to vindicate it, yet expect us to believe it? They grant a right of property to consume, and even to waste, but not to produce; not to employ with a view to a return. Why is the right of property thus restricted and mutilated? Would it not be more consistent to deny and to abolish it altogether?

There is another question and a very important one to be answered. Is it probable that in a collectivist community there would be much to enjoy, to consume? Collectivists, of course, assure us that there would be abundance. But socialist revolutionists are a remarkably sanguine class of persons. Many of them

have got very near the length of believing that, if their theories were carried into practice, men would only require to sit down to table in order to have roasted pheasants flying into their plates. It, therefore, need not greatly astonish us to find that a number of Collectivists have supposed that under the régime of Collectivism three or four hours of work daily will secure to every labourer an adequate supply of the means of sustenance and comfort. But it is to be feared that they are much mistaken; that the means of sustenance and comfort are far from so abundant and easily procured as they imagine; and that men of average abilities, not placed in exceptionally favourable circumstances, who work merely three or four hours a day, will be as sure speedily to come to poverty and wretchedness in the future as such men have done in the past.

It is chiefly by the suppression of luxury that Collectivists hope to economise labour so immensely. And it must be admitted that the administrators of the Collectivist State would have greater power of suppressing luxury than those who have hitherto engaged in the task with such scant success. The extreme difficulty of directly superintending consumption has been the chief cause of the failure of attempts to enforce sumptuary laws; but Collectivism would act through the regulation of production, through refraining from ministering to any desire for what it deemed luxury. Its greater power in this respect, however, would probably turn out to be simply a greater power for mischief.

Luxury is so essentially relative and so extremely variable in its character and effects, that it is not a proper or safe subject for legislation. Attempts to suppress it by law are likely to do more harm than good by destroying stimuli to economic exertion and progress with which society cannot dispense. Even if it were suppressed the saving effected would be much less than Collectivists hope for, as far less labour is spent in the production of objects of luxury than they obviously fancy to be the case. In Britain it is only about a thirtieth part of the labour employed in production. In France it is more, about a twentieth. But then France makes objects of luxury for all the world; and she does so very much to her own advantage. A Parisian producer of *articles de luxe* indirectly acquires for France twice as much wheat as he would raise if he actually cultivated French soil. There would be more of the means of sustenance in Ireland if fewer of her

inhabitants were occupied in cultivating potatoes and more in producing objects of luxury.

Two strong reasons can be given for holding that were the system of Collectivism adopted the day of labour in this country would not be a short one, and that our production would be insufficient to supply even the primary and most urgent wants of our population. The first is that under this system individuals would have no sufficient personal interest to labour energetically or to economise prudently, to increase production or to moderate population. It is true that Collectivism does not propose, like Communism, to remunerate all labourers alike; but in all other respects it would preclude to a much greater extent the operation of personal motives to industry and carefulness. It does not, like Communism, take account of the characters and limit the number of its members, but undertakes to provide for all the inhabitants of a nation, while making the remuneration of each individual dependent on the energy, faithfulness, and competency of every other. Is it conceivable that under such a system ordinary men employed in the common branches of industry will labour as efficiently as at present, or, indeed, otherwise than most inefficiently? What motives will such a man have to exert himself? The sense of duty and the feeling of responsibility to God? Yes, if he is a conscientious and religious man, but not more than now when he has his private interests in addition. Fame? No fame is within the reach of the vast majority of men, and especially not in the common departments of labour. The advantage of the nation? Very few men can in the ordinary avocations of life do almost any perceptible good to a nation; but any man can obviously do good to himself, and to his wife and children, by industry and economy. Every individual ought to look to general ends beyond his individual ends, but few individuals are so fond of labour, and so given to prudence and temperance, that a regard for their own interests is a superfluous motive to them.

The second reason to which I have referred is that by accepting Collectivism we must be almost entirely deprived of the benefits of foreign trade. Collectivists do not deny this, for they are conscious of their inability to show how international trade could be carried on without prices, profits, interest, currency, the transactions of individuals, and, in a word, without involving the

destruction of the whole collectivist system. While not denying it, however, they maintain a " conspiracy of silence " as to its inevitable consequences. One most obvious consequence is that half of our present population would have to emigrate or starve. Another is that the population, after having been thus reduced, must continue, on pain of starvation, not to increase. How men can know what the population of Britain is, and what its agricultural acreage is, yet calmly contemplate the loss of foreign trade, and coolly promise their fellow-countrymen short days of labour and a plentiful supply of the good things of life, passes comprehension.

Collectivism could not fail to find the mere keeping up or maintenance of its capital to be a most difficult problem. It starts by appropriating the capital which individuals have formed, and it promises to divide the whole produce of labour among the labourers. But if this promise is honestly kept, the largest portion of the capital, all the circulating capital, will, in the course of a year, have disappeared, without being replaced, and the only capital remaining will be machines and buildings, the worse for the wear. In other words, if Collectivism keeps its promise to workmen, a speedy national bankruptcy is inevitable. Let us suppose, then, that it will not keep its promise. How will it replace and maintain, not to say augment, its capital ? It has deliberately stopped and choked up all the existent sources of capitalisation, all the motives and inducements to economy and investment on the part of individuals. It will not allow individuals, even if they save, to use their savings as capital. It can only, therefore, find capital for itself by some process of the nature of taxation. But this must be a poor and shallow source compared with those which contribute to the formation of capital at present. Men who have the means and opportunity of forming capital are generally anxious to capitalise as much as possible; but those who have the means and opportunity of paying taxes are as generally anxious to pay as little as possible. If a State meets its own necessary expenses by taxation it does well; for it to raise by taxation the whole capital needed by the nation from year to year cannot be rationally considered as a hopeful enterprise.

The task of maintaining the national capital by taxation would be all the harder, seeing that the Collectivist State would not

contain many rich people or people who save. Some Collectivists propose to allow the rich people whose capital they appropriate to retain during their lifetime a considerable portion of their wealth for consumption, for enjoyment, but not for production, not to use as capital. But even if expropriated capitalists are found content to settle down on these terms into collectivist citizens, their wealth must be lost, so far as the Collectivist State is concerned, to production, to capital. It is much more probable, however, that they would not be thus content, but would transfer themselves and their wealth to some more hospitable shore, where they could again start as capitalists, and have scope for a free and energetic life. It is obvious that it would be to the interest of all individuals who economised in a nation where Collectivism was established to send their savings abroad. The State could not prevent this without having recourse to arts of espionage and acts of tyranny degrading both to rulers and ruled, and tending to the foolish end of isolating the nation from the rest of the world, of withdrawing the current of its life from the general movement of history. In all probability it would fail, whatever means it employed. In all probability under Collectivism there would be a continuous decrease of capital at home, and a continuous flow of individual savings to swell the capital employed in foreign industry and enterprise.

My general conclusion, then, is that a Collectivist State can neither establish itself nor maintain itself; that Collectivism is incapable of any solid and stable realisation.

Nor is it desirable that it should be realised; for it is Socialism in the proper sense of the term—Socialism as essentially exclusive of liberty and inclusive of slavery. It would make the State enormously strong as compared with individuals, and individuals excessively weak as compared with the State. It would place every man in a position of absolute dependence on Government, with no real security for any kind of freedom. It is a system which could only be carried out through the agency of a vast host of officials and inspectors; and this is of itself a very serious objection. Official work is seldom equal to the work which individuals do for themselves; State inspectors themselves need to be inspected, and the highest inspector may be the least trustworthy of all; and where officials are numerous seekers of office are far more

numerous, which is a grievous source of corruption both to rulers and ruled, especially in a democracy. If a democracy would preserve and develop its liberties, it must keep the State within its due limits, guard against encouraging the multiplication of State officials, and, whenever it can, organise itself freely from within by voluntary associations, instead of allowing itself to be organised compulsorily from without through the State. With the natural development of the national life there will, indeed, be also a certain natural and legitimate expansion of the sphere of State activity; yet none the less every unnecessary law, every unnecessary class of State officials, involves an unnecessary limitation of popular liberty, is a danger to or a drag on popular liberty. There is no cruder or more harmful conceit current than the notion that since votes are now so common the State cannot be too powerful, or legislation too extended. The State ought to be strong only for the performance of its strictly appropriate functions; every further increase or extension of its power must be an encroachment on freedom and justice. The omnipotence of the State, it has been justly said, is the utter helplessness of the individual.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

Dr. Schäffle, in Letter 11 of his "Impossibility of Social Democracy," has forcibly presented the chief valid objections to Democratic Collectivism. I shall here briefly summarise his statement of them.

1. Collectivist production is impossible on a democratic basis. It could only be maintained and directed by a stable self-sufficient authority and a powerful and carefully graduated administrative system of a non-democratic character, and without any charms for the proletariat. "But then where would be your democratic republic from top to bottom and from centre to circumference? Where would be your freedom and equality? Where would be your security against misuse of power and against exploitation?"

2. Collectivism proposes "to eliminate nature and property, two out of the three factors of production; to transfer the ownership of the means of production entirely to the community; and to weld all businesses of the same kind—however unequal the natural efficiency of the instruments may be in the various sections—into one great 'social' department of industry worked on the principle of equal remuneration for equal contributions of labour-time. . . . But under a purely democratic organisation, a materialistic and greedy host of individuals, puffed up by popular sovereignty, and fed with constant flattery, would not easily submit to the sacrifices required by

the immense savings necessary to multiplying the means of production. Still less would the members of such productive sections as are equipped with the instruments of production of highest natural efficiency be inclined to cast in the surplus product of their labour with the deficient production of others. Strife and confusion without end would be the result of attempting it."

3. "Social Democracy promises an impossibility in undertaking, without danger to the efficiency of production, to unite all branches of it, and in each branch all the separate firms and business-companies into one single body with uniform labour-credit and uniform estimation of labour-time. Herein it goes upon the supposition that the whole tendency of production is toward business on a large scale with local self-complete branches on factory lines. Yet this is a most arbitrary assumption." Agriculture tends in the direction of small or moderately large farms. Even in trade there will always remain over a mass of small scattered pursuits that entirely escape control.

4. "Social Democracy promises to the industrial proletariat a fabulous increase in the net result of national production, hence an increase of dividends of the national revenue, and a general rise of labour-returns all round. This increased productivity of industry would perhaps be conceivable if a firm administration could be set over the collective production, and if it were also possible to inspire all the producers with the highest interest alike in diminishing the cost, and in increasing the productivity of labour. But Social Democracy as such refuses to vest the necessary authority in the administration, and does not know how to introduce an adequate system of rewards and punishments for the group as a whole, and for the individuals in each productive group, however necessary a condition this may be of a really high level of production. Therefore, on the side of productivity again, all these delusive representations as to the capacity and possibility of democratic collective production are groundless. Without giving both every employer and every one employed the highest individual interest in the work, and involving them in profits or losses as the case may be, both ideal and material, it would be utterly impossible to attain even such a measure of productivity for the national labour as the capitalist system manages to extract. . . . Without a sufficiently strong and attractive reward for individual or corporate pre-eminence, without strongly deterrent drawbacks and compensatory obligations for bad and unproductive work, a collective system of production is inconceivable, or at least any system that would even distantly approach in efficiency the capitalistic system of to-day. But democratic equality cannot tolerate such strong rewards and punishments. The scale of remuneration in the existing civil and military systems would be among the very first things Social Democracy would overthrow, and rightly, according to its principles.

So long as men are not incipient angels—and that will be for a good while yet—*democratic* collective production can never make good its promises, because it will not tolerate the methods of *reward and punishment for the achievements of individuals and of groups*, which under its system would need to be specially and peculiarly strong."

5. Social Democracy is utterly unable to fulfil its promise of strictly apportioning to each person the exact value of the product of his social labour. It has discovered no principle or method of determining what a "fair wage" is. So far from preventing exploitation it could not fail to do injustice to those whose average productiveness is higher than that of their neighbours. "The fanaticism with which the gospel of Marx's theory of value was at one time preached rests upon superstition, and upon a wholly superficial misconception of facts. . . . It is not only not proved, it is absolutely unprovable, that a distribution measured by the quantum of social labour-time given by each would represent distribution in proportion to the measure of product value contributed by each."

6. It is indispensable alike in the interests of the individual and of society that each person should be remunerated in proportion to the social value of his work. Social Democracy fully acknowledges this, and promises to accomplish it, but necessarily fails to keep its promise. For, however socially useful this proportional remuneration is, and however little any continuous advance in civilisation can be made without its enforcements, the principle is still undeniably aristocratic, and totally incompatible with a one-sided democratic equality. "A Social Democracy which once admitted this principle would no longer be a democracy at all after the heart of the masses."

7. Collectivist Socialism further promises the distribution of the product in a brotherly fashion according to needs. But this is not consistent with the promise of distribution according to the value of the labour contribution. It is besides impracticable. "If in a Democratic Collectivism it were to be attempted from the outset to apportion men's share, not according to their contribution of work, but according to their needs, the result would be that shortly every portion of the 'sovereign people' would appear to be, and would even be, in a great state of need and destitution. Everything would get out of hand, and a hopeless confusion ensue, the only way out of the difficulty being to declare a universal equality of need, a solution most unjust, most wearisome, and most conducive to idleness."

8. Democratic Collectivism undertakes to suppress all "exploitation." It can, however, do nothing of the kind, inasmuch as the real value contributed by labour to the product cannot be determined. It would even, by suppressing all individual home-production, make impossible in any case a distribution of the entire product of labour or of its full realised value. It would thus open a far wider field for exploitation

than any hitherto known system of production. "The private capitalist of course could no longer exploit the wage-labourer, since all private capital would be over and done with. But labourer could very really exploit labourer, the administrators could exploit those under them, the lazy could exploit the industrious, the impudent their more modest fellow-workers, and the demagogue those who opposed him. Under such a system above all others it would be impossible to set any limits to this. It would be the very system to lend itself most freely to exploitation, as it would have no means of defending itself from practical demagogy and the discouraging of the more productive and more useful class of labour. With the quantitative reckoning of labour-time, with the setting up of a 'normal performance of work,' with the merging of intensive and extensive measurement of labour, things might reach such a pitch that Marx's vampire, 'the Capitalist,' would show up as a highly respectable figure compared with the Social Democratic parasites, hoodwinkers of the people, a majority of idlers and sluggards. The State would be the arch-vampire, the new State, whose function it would be to provide pleasure for the people and to fill up for each and all the highest measure of earthly bliss."

9. Another very attractive promise of Social Democracy is that under the collectivist system there will be no paralyses of trade. It professes that, unlike capitalistic society, it will not labour at hazard, but so accurately estimate demands and needs as to hold in constant equilibrium every kind of supply with every kind of requirement; and that by securing for the labourers a larger remuneration it will render them more competent throughout the whole range of production to purchase and consume. But this is only vain boasting. It has in nowise shown that it will be able to do either of these things. Besides, crises in trade are largely due to natural causes, and to conjunctures or overpowering chains or combinations of circumstances, many of which men can neither foresee nor control. And even could they be so far mastered by means of a strenuous regulation of needs and compulsion of individual tastes, Democratic Collectivism would be, in virtue of its extremely democratic character, of all systems the least competent to perform so unpleasant, unpopular, and tremendous a task. "The eternal unrest and disturbance of this administrative guidance of production, together with the capricious changes of desire and demand in the sovereign people, would most certainly increase, to an extraordinary degree, the tyrannous fatality of these ever recurrent crises."

10. Democratic Collectivism promises to abolish what it regards as the slavery of the wage-system. The system, however, by which it would do so is one far more justly chargeable with involving slavery. As regards this argument see the words already quoted on p. 42.

These arguments are all extremely worthy of consideration for their

own sakes. They fully sustain Dr. Schäffle's contention that Social Democracy "can never fulfil a single one of its glowing promises." They have, however, a further interest simply as coming from Dr. Schäffle. His earlier work, the "Quintessence of Socialism," 1878, was widely regarded as not only a socialistic production, but as the only production of the kind which had succeeded in showing that Collectivism was not an altogether impracticable and impossible scheme. Marx and his coadjutors had done nothing in this direction; their work had been merely critical and destructive. Schäffle undertook the task which they had not ventured on, and made Collectivism look as plausible as possible. He presented the case for it so skilfully indeed, that all those who have since attempted to show its practicability have done little else than substantially repeat what he had said. It cannot, then, be reasonably averred that he has not thoroughly understood what Collectivism means, and is worth; that he has not comprehended it profoundly, and from within. Yet what is his real opinion of it? That we learn from the supplement to the "Quintessence"—from the "Impossibility of Social Democracy," 1884.* It is a very definite and decided opinion—the conviction that "the faith in the millennial kingdom of Democratic Collectivism is a mere bigotry and superstition, and as uncouth a one as has ever been cherished in any age." As was, perhaps, to be expected, those who had received the earlier work with jubilation entered into "a conspiracy of silence" regarding the latter.†

[* In a recently published autobiography Dr. Schäffle has pointed out how his "Quintessence of Socialism" came to be published.]

† Among the many able works which have been published in refutation of Collectivism the most conclusive and satisfactory on the whole, in the opinion of the present writer, is M. Paul Leroy-Beaulieu's "Le Collectivisme, examen critique du nouveau socialisme." 3e. éd. 1893.

CHAPTER VIII

SOCIALISM AND SOCIAL ORGANISATION

SOCIALISM is a theory as to the organisation of society. It has done good service by insisting on the need for more and better social organisation. It was especially by the boldness and keenness of their criticism of the actual constitution of society that the founders of modern Socialism—Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen—drew attention to themselves, and gained a hearing for their proposals. And so has it been with their successors. It is largely because of the amount of truth in their teaching as to the prevalence of disorder and anarchy, disease and misery in society, that their views have obtained so large a measure of sympathy and success.

Nor is this other than natural, seeing that society is really in every organ, portion, and department of it in a far from satisfactory condition. There is no profession without either just grievances or unjust privileges. Land is, in general, poorly remunerative to its proprietors; farming is precarious; and agricultural labourers are depressed and discontented not without reason. The war between labour and capital becomes increasingly embittered and dangerous. There can be no reasonable doubt that in not a few occupations men and women are working far too many hours, and are consequently left without time and strength for living fully human lives. It is unquestionable that under the guise of business hateful injustice is perpetrated to an enormous extent; and that by lying devices, dishonest tricks, heartless practices, a large number of persons, reputed respectable, beggar their neighbours and enrich themselves. It is terrible to think of the physical and moral condition and surroundings of multitudes of human beings in many of our large towns; and of all the misery and vice implied in the statistics of drunkenness, prostitution, and crime in this empire.

The socialistic criticism of society as at present constituted has not only been directly and wholly useful in so far as it has been temperate and well-founded; it has also been indirectly and

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partially useful even when passionate and exaggerated, as it has almost always been. By its very violence and onesidedness it has provoked counter-criticism, and led to closer and more comprehensive investigation. It has contributed to a general recognition of the necessity of instituting careful and systematic inquiries into the social difficulties and evils with which it is contemplated to deal by legislation and collective action. And this is an important gain. A thorough diagnosis is as necessary to the cure of social as of bodily diseases. An adequate knowledge would of itself go far to secure the removal of many social troubles and grievances; in regard to all of them it is the indispensable condition of effective remedial measures. Ignorant intervention, however benevolent, only complicates the difficulties which it seeks to solve, and aggravates the evils which it hopes to cure.

As to the practicability of social organisation Socialism cannot be charged with the lack either of faith or of hope. Its leading representatives to-day show the same sort of simple and credulous confidence in their ability to transform and beautify society which was so conspicuous in Owen, Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Cabet. It is possible, indeed, as the example of Von Hartmann proves, to combine Socialism with Pessimism, at least to the extent of believing that it will inevitably come, yet only as a stage of illusion and misery in the course of humanity towards annihilation. But this conjunction is rare, and probably not to be met with at all outside a small philosophical circle. As a rule Socialists take an extremely rosy view of the near future even when they take a most gloomy view of the entire past.

And in this confidence and hopefulness there is undoubtedly something true and worthy of commendation. Faith and hope are necessary to those who would face aright the future and its duties. And there are good reasons for cherishing them within certain limits; namely, all the evidences which we have for concluding that there has been progress or improvement in the past; that there exists an Eternal Power which makes for righteousness; and that the evils which afflict society are in their very nature curable or diminishable by individual and collective effort. But faith is never wholly good except when entirely conformed to reason; nor is hope ever wholly good except when it is entirely in accord with the laws and lessons of experience. The faith and

hope of Socialism, however, even when it claims to be scientific, largely outrun reason and ignore experience; they are largely the most childish simplicity and credulity. If they have saved, as some suppose, a large section of the working classes from pessimistic despair, it is so far well; yet there must be serious danger of a reaction when the extent of their irrationality is discovered.

The great ends of life can by no means be so easily or so readily realised as Socialists imply in their schemes of social organisation. Labour is the law of life; hard labour is the sign of earnest life. In the sweat of the brow the vast majority of men must eat their bread. In the sweat of the brain the mental worker must hammer out his thoughts. In the bloody sweat of a broken heart the martyr must consummate his sacrifice. So has it been for ages on ages, and so it is likely to be for ages on ages to come, even until man is altogether different from what he is now, and no longer needs the stimulus of hardship or the correction of suffering. Life has obviously not been meant, on the whole, to be easy, devoid of strain, untried by misery and affliction. And those who tell us that they have any scheme by which they can make it so are fanatics or charlatans.

It is much more difficult to become rich, or even to get a moderate portion of the good things of this life, than Socialists admit. There is no class of creatures in the world of which some do not die of starvation. Why should man be an exception? Man, it is true, is better than a beast; but just because he is so, suffering has more and higher uses to him than to a beast. He has reason, and therefore is capable of indefinite progress while the lower creatures are not; but therefore also he is liable to innumerable aberrations from which they are exempt, and which he can only slowly learn to detect and abandon in the school of want and adversity.

No distribution of the present wealth of the world would give plenty to every one. Were all the gold supposed to be in the world at present equally distributed each person would hardly get a sovereign apiece. Were all the land in Britain equally distributed among its inhabitants each person could not get more than an [illegible]re and a third. Were all the rents of all the landowners [illegible] Britain appropriated by the nation to pay the taxes [illegible]ey would be insufficient to do so. Were the people of France

grouped into households of four individuals each, and the whole annual income of France equally apportioned among them, each of these households, it has been calculated, would only receive about three francs a day. Were the workmen to obtain all the profits of the capitalists to themselves even in those trades where there are the largest capitalists, in scarcely any case would they receive four shillings per week more than they do.

Most workmen can save more weekly by the exercise of good sense and self-denial than the State could afford to give them beyond what they already receive were Collectivism established even without expense. The spontaneous bounties of the earth become yearly less adequate to support its inhabitants. Each new generation is thrown more on its own powers of invention and exertion. Individuals may find "short cuts" to wealth, or even "break through and steal" their neighbours' property; but there is no public royal road to wealth; no other honest path for the great majority of men even to a competency of external goods than that of self-denial and toil.

The way to happiness is still more difficult to discover and follow than that to wealth. They are very different ways, and often those who find the one lose the other. "Men," said Hobbes, "are never less at ease than when most at ease." "The more things improve," said Mr. Spencer, "the louder become the exclamations about their badness." History abounds in facts which warrant these statements. And one of the most striking of them is that, although the workmen of Europe never had so much freedom and power, or received so large a proportion of the wealth of Europe as since the triumph of free-trade and the introduction of machinery and the rise of the large industrial system, an enormous number of them believe that never till then had their class been so robbed, enslaved, and afflicted, and that never was there more need than at present to revolutionise society, and to reconstruct it on altogether new principles.*

* That men with merely the education of ordinary workmen should be able to believe their condition worse than that of the workmen of all former generations is, of course, but little surprising, when men like Wm. Morris and E. Belfort Bax can gravely assert that "*the whole of our unskilled laboring classes are in a far worse position as to food, housing, and clothing than are but the extreme fringe of the corresponding class in the Middle Ages*" ("Socialism: its Growth and Outcome," p. 79). It is to be regretted that none of those who have made assertions of this kind have attempted to prove them, although

I do not blame them; and still less do I blame the Power which has made human nature so that the more it gets the more it would have, and that attainment rarely brings to it contentment, or outward prosperity inward satisfaction; for I see that unhappiness and discontent have uses in the education of mankind and functions in history which abundantly justify their existence. But I cannot take due account either of the character of human nature nor of the history of the operative classes without inferring that if working men believe, as Socialists endeavour to persuade them to believe, that were Communism or Collectivism even established and found to possess all the economic advantages which have been ascribed to them, unhappiness and discontent would thereby be lessened, they are lamentably easy to delude. The sources of human misery are not so easily stopped. Dissatisfaction will not be conjured away by any change in the mere economic arrangements of society. Before as after all such changes there will be not only discontent but the risks of disorder, conspiracy, and revolution, which at present exist. Collectivism will need its police and its soldiers, its tribunals and prisons and armaments, just like Industrialism. Good reasons, indeed, might, I think, be given for holding that it must require a larger force at its disposal to crush rebellion and to ensure peace.

Excellence of every kind is, like happiness, very difficult to attain. None of the ideal aims implicit in our nature can be fully realised; and even approximations thereto can only be made through toil and self-denial. To become proficient in any department of learning, science, or art, a man must not only have superior and appropriate abilities, but make a patient, strenuous, and anxious use of them. It is only the very few who with their utmost exertion can attain high eminence, true greatness, of any kind. The late M. Littré's ordinary day of intellectual toil was, during a considerable period of his life, about fourteen hours; and the labours of the mind are certainly not less exhausting than those of the body.

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they could hardly have failed to perceive that if they succeeded they would thereby not only make a most valuable contribution to historical science, but inflict a really fatal blow on the civilisation which they detest. Julius Wolff, in his "System der Socialpolitik," Bd. i. pp. 375-389, has some interesting remarks on such assertions, and on the state of mind in which they originate.

The way of perfect duty is the hardest way of all. We have been told that it is "easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven," that kingdom which is righteousness and purity and peace of spirit. Is it easier for the poor to enter in? When I consider their temptations and difficulties I fear that it may often not be so.

Manifestly we have not been made for ease and happiness in this world. Manifestly those who would persuade us that merely to alter our social arrangements will go far to secure our welfare are mistaken. An illusion so childish is unworthy of grown men, and the more plainly those who foster it or cherish it are told so the better. We should look at the world as it is, face life as it is, seek no earthly paradise, as it is sure to be only a fool's paradise, and be content patiently to endure hardships and resolutely to encounter obstacles, if thereby we can improve, even a little, either ourselves or our fellow-men.

We have no right to expect to see in our days complete social organisation, or any near approximation to it. Social organisation proceeds with varying rates of rapidity at different times and in different places, but on the whole slowly. It is not accomplished by leaps and bounds. It is a continuous process which began with the beginning of society and has never been quite arrested, but which has always been only a gradual transformation of the old into the new through slight but repeated modifications. Society has been always organic, and, therefore, has been always organising or disorganising itself; it is organic now, and, therefore, at every point the subject of organisation or disorganisation. It is not a collection or mass of inorganic materials capable of being organised at will, as wood, stone, and metals can be built up into a house according to a given plan, and as rapidly as may be wished. The power of statesmen in relation to the organisation of society is slight in comparison with the power of builders and engineers in relation to houses and bridges. Society must organise itself by a slow and multiform evolution.

Now, it is not even denied by contemporary Socialists that their predecessors overlooked the truth just indicated, and, in consequence, failed to fulfil the promises which they made, and to justify the hopes which they awakened; that Owen, Saint-Simon, and Fourier, for instance, proceeded on the assumption that they

could organise society according to their several ideals and schemes without troubling themselves much as to its own natural evolution; and that the result was that their systems were essentially Utopian and quite unrealisable on any large scale. What the socialistic theorists of to-day tell us is that they have got wholly rid of this error; that Socialism has ceased to be Utopian, and is now scientific; that instead of contravening historical evolution the new Socialism is based upon it; and that its adherents do not "look for anything but the gradual passing of the old order into the new, without breach of continuity or abrupt general change of social tissue."

Such statements are not to be implicitly trusted. For, first, a theoretical belief in the necessarily gradual evolution of society is quite compatible with practical disregard of its natural and rational consequences. Saint-Simon and Fourier, like Condorcet before them, saw more clearly than the bulk of their contemporaries that the history of mankind had been a slow and continuous development, and yet they extravagantly deceived themselves as to the rate and character of social organisation in the future. Auguste Comte had quite as firm a grasp of the conception of historical evolution as Karl Marx, and yet he believed that his ludicrous religion of humanity would be established throughout the West during the nineteenth century; in seven years afterwards over the monotheistic East; and in thirteen years more, by the conversion and regeneration of all the polytheistic and fetichist peoples, over the whole earth. It is not less possible for even cultured and intellectual Marxist Collectivists, and evolutionist Socialists of other types, to be as credulous; and most of them, I imagine, are so.

They argue that Collectivism, for example, is inevitably arising from industrialism, as industrialism arose from feudalism, and because they thus reason from a scientific conception or theory, that of historical evolution, they conclude that they must be sober scientific thinkers. But even if the argument was good, it would not warrant expectation of the establishment of Collectivism in Europe until three or four hundred years from this date. It has taken considerably more than that length of time for industrialism to grow out of feudalism. I should be much surprised, however, to learn that more than a very few of the reputedly most scientific Collectivists are not fancying that Collectivism will come almost

as speedily as Comte supposed the Positivist organisation of society would come. Of course, I admit that were they less credulous and optimistic they would also be less popular as prophets, less persuasive as proselytisers. To set forth at Hyde Park corner on a Sunday evening that the collectivist régime might be expected to begin about the year 2300, supposing no unforeseen conjunctures or catastrophes powerful enough absolutely to prevent or indefinitely to delay its advent intervened, would not, indeed, gain many converts. To do so in an assemblage of professedly scientific Socialists, believers alike in Marx and Darwin, at Berlin or Paris on the first of May, might be dangerous.

Further, no evidence of the reality of a historical evolution towards Socialism properly so called has as yet been produced. The attempts made by Marx and others to prove that in societies which adopt the principles of industrial freedom the rich will inevitably grow richer and the poor poorer, and the number of landed proprietors and manufacturing and commercial capitalists steadily diminish through the ruin of the smaller ones by the larger, until all wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few magnates on whom the rest of the population will be entirely dependent for the necessaries of life, are obvious failures. Free trade in land can be shown to tend to a rational subdivision of the land. Where it has become the property of a few, the chief causes thereof have been improper restrictions on liberty as to its sale and purchase. When Marx wrote there was some excuse for supposing that the growth of our industrial and commercial system was steadily tending to the extinction of all capitalists except the largest; but there is none for it now when the system may be everywhere seen to necessitate by the very magnitude of its operations the combination of numerous capitalists, large and small, in single undertakings of all sorts. The vast manufactories and gigantic commercial enterprises of the present day instead of lessening are greatly increasing the number of capitalists, and facilitating the entrance of workmen into the ranks of capitalists. A multitude of the peasant proprietors of France and many of the *cochers de fiacre* of Paris were investors in the unfortunate Panama scheme.

It must be added that the present order of society cannot possibly pass into Collectivism by evolution. If it does so at all it must be through revolution. It is conceivable, although most improbable,

that a time may come when all the possessors of capital in Great Britain will deposit their capital in a vast fund to be administered and employed by one directing body; and that this result may be brought about by a process of historical evolution going on from day to day, without any breach of continuity, through generations and centuries. But manifestly should a day ever come when the directorate or the State undertook to grant to all the non-capitalists in the nation equal rights to the stock and the profits of the fund as to the capitalists, this measure of expropriation, collectivisation, or spoliation, must be a revolutionary measure involving a breach of continuity, a rupture of social tissue, unprecedented in the history of mankind. Radical or Revolutionary Socialists are right in maintaining that Collectivism cannot be established by evolution. Evolutionary Socialists conclusively argue that social organisation cannot be satisfactorily or successfully effected by revolution.

The true organisation of society must not only be a gradual evolution, but must be due mainly to the exercise of liberty, not to the action of authority. It must be originated and carried on chiefly from within, not from without. It must be to a far greater extent the combined and collective work of the moral personalities who compose a nation than of the officials who compose its Government. There can be no good government of a community the members of which are not already accustomed to govern themselves aright. The healing of society to be effective must proceed on the whole from the centre outwards.

Socialism has never seen this clearly nor acknowledged it fully. From its very nature it cannot do so, for it undervalues the individual. It leads men to expect extravagant results from merely repairing or reconstructing the outward mechanism of society. It encourages them to fancy that their welfare is more dependent on what Government does than on what they do themselves; on the wisdom and power of their legislators than on their own intelligence and virtue. There can be no more foolish and baneful illusion. Let any drunkard become sober, or any profligate a man of clean and regular life, and he has done far more for himself than any Government can do for him. Let any body of men who are bound down by superstition and ignorance deliver themselves from their folly, and they will obtain both for themselves and for

their country more moral and political liberty than any Act of Parliament can give them; while Almighty Power itself cannot make them free either as citizens or as men so long as they retain in their hearts that servility and terror which degrades and debases them.

Nations have only enjoyed a healthy and vigorous life when wisely jealous of the encroachments of authority on individual rights and liberties; they have sunk into helplessness and corruption whenever they have been content to be dependent on their Governments. The men who have done most for society have been those who were the least inclined to obey its bidding when it had no moral claim to command. It is because British men have been, perhaps above all others, self-reliant men, with strongly marked differences of character, with resolute, independent wills, who would take their own way and work out their own individual schemes and purposes, who were not afraid of defying public opinion and social authority, who were ready to do battle on their own account against all comers, when they felt that they had right on their side, that Britain stands now where she does among the nations of the world.

All plans of social organisation which tend to weaken and to destroy individuality of character, independence and energy of conduct, ought to be rejected. In seeking to determine when collective action, the exercise of social authority, is legitimate or the reverse, we may very safely decide according to the evidence as to whether it will fortify and develop or restrict and discourage individual freedom and activity. Can there be any reasonable doubt that, tested by this criterion, such a scheme of social organisation as Collectivism must be condemned? The whole tendency of Collectivism is to replace a resistible capitalism by an irresistible officialism; to make social authority omnipotent and individual wills powerless; to destroy liberty and to establish despotism. Hence any society which accepts it must find it, instead of a panacea for its evils, a mortal poison. But happily the love of liberty is too prevalent and its advantages too obvious to allow of its general acceptance. It is so manifestly contrary to the true nature of man and inconsistent with the prosperity and progress of society, that, notwithstanding all its pretensions to a scientific and practical character, it must inevitably come to be regarded

as not less essentially Utopian than the Phalansterianism of Fourier or the Positive Polity of Comte.

One great reason why social organisation must be mainly the work of individuals left free to act for themselves and to associate together as they please, so long as they abstain from injustice and from encroachment on the freedom of others, is a fact already referred to, namely, that man has various aims in life, and these distinct aims, and often difficult to harmonise. He is not only a physical being with physical appetites, to whom life is only an economic problem ; but also a moral being, conscious of the claims of duty and charity ; an intellectual being, to whose mind truth is as necessary as light is to his eyes ; a being capable of æsthetic vision and enjoyment and of artistic creation ; and a religious being, who feels relationship to the Divine, with corresponding hopes, fears, and obligations. And, of course, if he would live conformably to his nature he must seek to realise, as far as he can, all the proximate aims to which it tends, and to reconcile and unify them as best he may, by reference to an ultimate and comprehensive end. But who except himself can do this for any human being ? And how can even he do it for himself unless he is free to act and free to combine with those who can aid him, in such ways as the consciousness of his own wants may suggest to him ?

Society is as complex as man. It has as many elements and activities as human nature. It can only be a fitting medium for the development of the individual by having organs and institutions adapted to all that is essential in the individual. Its true organisation must consequently imply the evolution of all that is involved in, and distinctive of, humanity. Hence there was much truth in Gambetta's famous declaration—" There is no social problem ; there are only social problems." It is impossible to resolve all social problems into one, or even to reduce all kinds of social problems to a single class. From the very nature of man, and therefore, from the very nature of society, there are classes of social questions, all of direct and vital importance to social organisation, which although closely connected and not incapable of co-ordination, are essentially distinct, and consequently admit of no common solution.

Socialists almost always assume the contrary. And for this plain reason that unless the natures of man and of society are regarded

as far meaner, poorer, and simpler than they really are, the claim to regulate human life and to organise human society socialistically is manifestly presumptuous. To render the claim plausible it must sacrifice the individual to society, and give inadequate views of the natures and ends of both. The only modern Socialist, so far as I am aware, who has made a serious and sustained attempt to devise a comprehensive scheme of social organisation is Comte. Few men have possessed greater synthetic and systematising power. And yet his attempt at social reconstruction was, notwithstanding many valuable elements and indications, a grotesque and gigantic failure. It assumed as a fundamental truth that belief in the entire subordination of the individual to society which more than any other error vitiated the political philosophy and political practice of classical antiquity, and from which Christianity emancipated the European mind. It proposed to organise the definitive society of the future according to the mediæval pattern; to entrust the government of it to a temporal and spiritual power—a patriciate and a clergy—the former centring in a supreme triumvirate and the latter in a supreme pontiff—and the two conjointly regulating the whole lives, bodily and mental, affective and active, private and public, in minute conformity to the creed of Comte; and even, while forbidding belief in the existence of God and of the immortality of the soul, to impose a varied and elaborate worship. It is unnecessary to criticise such a system, although it is noteworthy as an almost unique attempt to accomplish the task incumbent on Socialism as a theory of social organisation.

Socialism generally concerns itself mainly or exclusively with the organisation of industry. But it manifestly thereby forfeits all claim to be considered an adequate theory of society, if society really has a religious, ethical, æsthetic, and intellectual work to do as well as an economic one; if it requires to organise its science and speculation, its art and literature, its laws and morals, its faith and worship, equally with its labour and wealth. When Socialism confines itself, as it commonly does, to the sphere of industry, it can only prove itself to be a sufficient and satisfactory theory of social organisation by proving that there is far less in society to organise than is generally supposed; that men "live by bread alone," and need only such advantages as wealth properly

distributed will procure for them; that they are merely creatures of earth and time; and that all aims which presuppose thoughts of absolute truth and right, of God and of eternity, are to be discarded as illusory. Of course, it does not prove this; but it almost always assumes it as if it had been proved. There is at present little Socialism properly so called which does not rest on an atheistic or agnostic view of the universe, on a hedonistic or utilitarian theory of conduct, and on a conception of the natures of man and of society which ejects or ignores much of the wealth of their contents.

The prevalent socialistic mode of solving the problem of social organisation is that of simplifying it by eliminating as many of its essential elements as render the task of Socialism difficult. It is wonderful to what an extent many Socialists thus simplify it. Many of them look forward to the near abolition even of politics. Two very eminent modern Socialists, Engels and Liebknecht, have expected that when the State establishes Collectivism by socialising all capital and directing and controlling all labour, so far from employing its enormous power to extend its sphere of action and encroach on the rights of individuals and of neighbouring States, it will voluntarily die unto its old self, sacrifice its very existence as a State by ceasing to be political at all, and, as one of them has said, "concern itself no longer with the government of persons but with the administration of things." That such a notion as this of the possible elimination of all political interests and struggles from the life of society in the future, and the possible reduction of all the activities of government to that of individual direction, should have been entertained by the chief living theorist and the greatest living tactician of the Socialism which especially pretends to be scientific and practical, shows how absurd a thought may be generated by an enthusiastic wish even in a naturally clear and vigorous mind, and may well lead us to suspect that much else in the system may be of the same character and origin.

That there will be no serious religious difficulties and troubles under the régime of Collectivism is generally assumed by the advocates of the system. With rare exceptions, they are decidedly hostile to Theism, Christianity, and the Church, and only repudiate the charge of being anti-religious on the ground that Socialism itself so purifies and ennobles human life as to be entitled to the name of religion. But all that is commonly called religion, and all

that has been founded on it, they regard as pernicious superstition, and an obstacle to the organisation of society on collectivist lines. While clear and explicit, however, in their denunciation of it, they are extremely vague and reticent as to how they mean to deal with it. Can Collectivism be established at all until religion and religious institutions are got rid of? Some think that it cannot; others that it can. Those who think that it cannot seem to me to have the clearer vision; but I should like them to explain how, then, they hope to get it established. What do they mean to do with Theists, Protestants, Catholics, Greek Christians, Jews, and Mohammedans? They are not likely for centuries to convince them by arguments. They are not strong enough to overcome them by force. To assume that religion is so effete that those who profess it are ready to renounce it without being either intellectually convinced or physically coerced is unjust and unwarranted.

On the other hand, suppose that Collectivism is established, and yet that religions and Churches are not overthrown. How, in this case, can the collectivist society be governed and organised by a merely temporal or industrial power? How can it fail to be governed and organised also by the spiritual power, which may be, perhaps, all the more influential and despotic because the temporal power is at once despotic and exclusively industrial? How can a Collectivism which is tolerant of religion be without religious troubles? I have sought in vain in the writings of Collectivists for definite and reasoned answers to these questions. I have only found instead these two assumptions, alike without evidence: that religion will either somehow speedily disappear to make way for Collectivism; or that if it survives its establishment it will have changed its nature, lost the will and power to move and to agitate the hearts of men, and will allow the temporal authority to mould and to govern society with undivided sway.

If what we have been maintaining is true even in substance, social organisation is from its very nature a complex operation, and incapable of being so simplified as Collectivists and most other Socialists suppose. It must be carried on in a variety of directions which are distinct, and none of which are to be overlooked or neglected. It must be carried on, therefore, not through the State alone, but much more through the individual units which compose society, and those natural or voluntary groups of individual units

which may be considered the organs of society; not according to a single plan laid down by authority, but along a number of lines freely chosen.

The individual is of primary importance. Society is composed of individuals, and their spirit is its spirit. This is not to say that the individual is of exclusive importance, or that we are not to take full account of the dependence of character on social circumstances. It does not mean that we are Individualists; that we sever the individual from society, or absorb society in the individual, or oppose the individual to society. It only signifies that with the individualist error we set aside the socialist error also; that we refuse to regard individuals as the mere creatures of society instead of as mainly its creators, or to deny that they are ends in themselves, with lives of their own. The individualist "abstraction" is bad; the socialist "abstraction" is still worse. The influence of the social atmosphere and of social surroundings is great, but still it is only secondary; mainly product not producer. The constitutive qualities and powers of human nature have been modified in many respects from age to age with the successive changes of society, but they have not been certainly or conspicuously altered in their essential character within the whole of recorded time. The Socialists of to-day who expect a vast mental and moral improvement of individuals from a mere reorganisation of society are just as Utopian as their predecessors have been. Social organisation without personal reformation will always have poor and disappointing results. Dr. Chalmers wrote his "Political Economy" to demonstrate that the economic well-being of a people is dependent on its moral well-being. Whether he quite succeeded or not is of small consequence, seeing that reason, experience, and history so amply testify to the truth of his thesis. Those who would reverse it and maintain that mere economic changes will produce moral well-being or even economic prosperity must be incompetent reasoners, slow to learn from experience, and hasty readers of history.

What chiefly differentiates man from man is character; what chiefly elevates man, and secures for him the rank and happiness of a man, is character; and character is always far less a product of society than the growth of personal self-development. Hence the extreme importance of the whole art of education, and of all

that directly affects true self-development or self-realisation. There is undoubtedly still abundant room and urgent need for improvement in this sphere. A vast amount of what passes for education is positively mischievous and tends directly not to educe and strengthen, but to repress and enfeeble the personality. Perhaps of all our social evils the least visible to the vulgar eye, yet the most cruel, wasteful, and deplorable, is the extent to which cramming is substituted for education in all kinds of schools from the lowest to the highest. If we only knew and felt what education really is, and recognised aright nothing to be worthy of the name which does not train the bodily powers, or improve temper and disposition, or evoke and widen the social sympathies, or awaken and regulate imagination, or quicken and exercise æsthetic discernment, or deepen and elevate the sense of reverence, or help to make conscience the uncontested sovereign of the human mind, we should have immensely less of poverty, of unmanly helplessness, of bad workmanship, of low tastes, of scandalous luxury, of intemperance, of licentiousness, of dishonesty, of irreligion, and the like, to complain of. Appropriate training to bodily deftness and dexterity, to intelligence, virtue, and religion, although obviously a prime condition of true social organisation, and just what education should supply, is either not given at all, or only in a wretchedly small measure by the so-called education of the present day. Of course I cannot dwell on this subject; it would be unfair, however, not to mention that as regards the true nature of education, and especially as regards the relation of true education to art, few have spoken worthier words or done nobler work than two socialist men of genius—John Ruskin and William Morris.

The importance of the Family follows from the importance of individuals. Fathers and mothers exert a far greater influence on the welfare of society than politicians and legislators. "The popular estimate of the family," says Westcott, "is an infallible criterion of the state of society. Heroes cannot save a country where the idea of the Family is degraded; and strong battalions are of no avail against homes guarded by faith and reverence and love."* Comte has declared that "the first seven years of life are the most decisive, because then a mother's discipline lays so firm a foundation that the rest of life is seldom able to affect it."

* "Social Aspects of Christianity," p. 22.

Not improbably he was right. Certainly there can be no satisfactory organisation of any community or nation in which the Family is not a healthy social organ.

From the time of Plato to the present day the constitution of the Family has been a favourite subject of socialistic speculation; and very naturally so, both because of the vast influence of the Family on society, and because at no period of its history has it been free from grave and deplorable defects. As we trace the evolution of the Family from the obscurity of the prehistoric age through various stages in the oriental world, in Greece, in Rome, and Christendom, terrible traces of the selfishness and cruelty of man, of the oppression and suffering of woman, of the maltreatment of the young, the feeble, and the dependent, and of legislative folly and iniquity, continually present themselves to our contemplation. Truly the task of socialist criticism is here very easy. But it is also of comparatively little value. What is needed is practical guidance in the work of amelioration, instruction of a truly constructive character. Of this, however, Socialism has singularly little to give us.

All the schemes of Family organisation proposed by Socialist theorists in the course of the last two thousand years and more have been of a kind which, had they unfortunately been adopted, would, instead of improving the world, have done it incalculable mischief. They have been reactions from actuality, not without some soul of truth and justice in them, yet so extreme and unnatural that carrying them into effect, far from purifying and elevating the Family, would have degraded it, and brutalised the community. And Socialism has in this direction made hardly any progress. Bebel and Lafargue have not got beyond Plato and Campanella. Socialist critics of what they call "the bourgeois Family" or "mercantile marriage," can easily point out various imperfections prevalent in modern domestic life; but when, granting their criticisms not to be without more or less foundation, we ask them how they propose to get rid of, or at least to lessen, the evils which they have indicated they have virtually no other answer to give us than that they would introduce evils far worse—absorption of the Family in the community, free love, the separation of spouses at will, transference of children from the charge of their parents to that of the State.

Without essential injustice the whole practical outcome of socialistic theorising as to the Family may be stated in the following sentences from the joint work of Morris and Bax: "The present marriage system is based on the general supposition of economic dependence of the woman on the man, and the consequent necessity for his making provision for her which she can legally enforce. This basis would disappear with the advent of social economic freedom, and no binding contract would be necessary between the parties as regards livelihood; while property in children would cease to exist, and every infant that came into the world would be born into full citizenship, and would enjoy all its advantages, whatever the conduct of its parents might be. Thus a new development of the family would take place, on the basis not of a predetermined lifelong business arrangement, to be formally and nominally held to, irrespective of circumstances, but on mutual inclination and affection, an association terminable at the will of either party. It is easy to see how great the gain would be to morality and sentiment in this change. At present in this country at least, a legal and quasi-moral offence has to be committed before the obviously unworkable contract can be set aside. On the Continent, it is true, even at the present day the marriage can be dissolved by mutual consent; but either party can, if so inclined, force the other into subjection, and prevent the exercise of his or her freedom. It is perhaps necessary to state that this change would not be made merely formally and mechanically. There would be no vestige of reprobation weighing on the dissolution of one tie and the forming of another. For the abhorrence of the oppression of the man by the woman or the woman by the man (both of which continually happen to-day under the ægis of our would-be moral institutions) will certainly be an essential outcome of the ethics of the New Society."* What meagre and uncertain results! What lame and impotent conclusions!

A true organisation of the Family cannot be effected on socialistic lines. It must proceed from and carefully maintain the autonomy of the Family against the encroachments of the community. It must treat the Family as a true society with rights and duties of its own, and as sacred and binding as are those of the State or the

* "Socialism, its Growth and Outcome."

nation. The late Pope—one of the wisest and worthiest of those who have occupied the papal throne—most justly said that "the idea that the civil government should, at its own discretion, penetrate and pervade the family and the household, is a great and pernicious mistake." A people which loses sight of this truth is one in which all personal liberties and all regard for justice will rapidly become extinct.

The economic dependence of the wife on the husband must always be the rule among the labouring classes. An emancipation of women from their household duties in order that they may be able to labour for remuneration in the service of the community, and of men from obligation to make provision for their wives and children, would produce a base kind of freedom economically and morally ruinous both to women and men, and to the former also cruelly unjust. Where the economic independence of women or men, in the married state, is actual or possible, it is not by abolishing the right of contract and substituting for it a condition of status that satisfactory arrangements can be reached as to the property of married people, but by the fuller development of the right of contract—a development towards the perfect equality of freedom and justice as regards husband and wife, and with no other restrictions than those necessary to guard against either of the contracting parties swindling the other, or both conspiring to swindle the public.

The movement towards securing to women equal rights with men and free scope to exercise all their faculties, although some have regarded it as likely to endanger and disorganise the Family, really tends directly and powerfully to its consolidation and true development. It favours the formation of a better class of women. It contributes largely to increase the number of women who are not necessitated to enter into loveless marriages. Within the last forty years there has been a decided improvement in this direction; and there will doubtless be more. It is a right direction, however, precisely because it leads away from the slavery which Socialism would introduce, and towards full personal freedom.

To transfer, as Socialists have proposed, the care of children from the Family to the State would be to rob the Family of a large portion both of its utility and of its happiness, and to devolve on the State responsibilities which it must necessarily fail to meet

aright. The State should supplement but not supersede the education of the Family. To replace marriage by mere association between man and woman terminable at the will of either, would be not, as Morris and Bax imagine, "a great gain to morality and sentiment," but an incalculable and irreparable loss. As long as the moral sense was so deadened and the better feelings of human nature so perverted as to tolerate the change, sexual promiscuity and hetairism would prevail. So-called Free Love is untrue and degrading love; love from which all the pure, permanent, and elevating elements are absent; love reduced to animal passion and imaginative illusions; the love which is powerful to destroy families but powerless to sustain and organise them.*

* The following observations of Dr. Schäffle may usefully supplement the preceding remarks as to the Family: "It is true we are told that things would for the most part remain as they are, and marriage-unions would still for the most part remain constant; Free Love would only be called into play for the loosening of unhappy marriages. Then why not let the stable marriage-tie be the rule, with separation allowed in cases where the marriage-union has become morally and physically impossible? Why not have at least the existing marriage law as among Protestants? But the whole statement, even if made in good faith, will not stand examination.

"What then is an 'unhappy' or relatively a 'happy' marriage? No one is perfect, and therefore not a single marriage can ever hope to be entirely 'happy.' First love must always yield to sober reality, after the cunning of nature has secured its end for the preservation of the species. In the indissoluble life-union of marriage, with the daily and hourly contact between the inevitable imperfections of both parties, there necessarily arise frictions and discords, which, if severance is free, will only too easily give rise to the most ill-considered separations from the effect of momentary passion; and all the more readily if the one party have begun to grow tedious to the other, or pleasant to a third party. The very essential advantage of the stable marriage-tie is just this, that it secures the peaceable adjustment of numberless unavoidable disagreements; that it prevents the many sparrings and jarrings of private life from reaching the public eye; that it allows of openness on both sides, and avoids the possibility of pretence; that it induces self-denial for the sake of others; that it insures a greater proportion of mutuality in both spiritual and physical cares for the general run of wedded couples—in short, that for the majority of cases at least a relative possibility of wedded happiness is attainable. Therefore the indissoluble marriage-tie must still remain the rule, and separation the exception, confined to cases where its persistence becomes a moral impossibility. But it is clear that if once the emancipation of woman made it general for her to step out of the house into public life, and if once the bond of common love and of common care for the offspring were loosened, or even weakened, frequent marriage changes would very easily become the rule, and permanent unions only the exception. The training in self-conquest, in gentleness, in consideration for others, in fairness, and in patience, which the present family and wedded relations entail, would also be lost in the entrance of all into public life outside the home. The gain to separate individuals in point of sensual gratification through fugitive unions would be very far from outweighing the loss of the ideal good attainable by man, and by man only, through the channel of marriage. . . . . Existing marriage rights and married life are susceptible

The Church draws its chief strength from religion, from what is spiritual in human nature, and as this is permanent, there is no probability that the Church will ever cease to be a social force. We have only to study with intelligence and care the state of feeling and of opinion, and the relative strength of parties and of tendencies in Italy, Spain, France, Belgium, and Britain, to convince ourselves that the religious question, far from having lost its interest and importance, is likely to be far more agitated in the twentieth century of our era than it has been in the nineteenth, to be more interwoven with political and social questions, and to be the source of more momentous changes in the development of humanity. Those who fancy that they are indicating a way of solving or of settling it when they repeat such party catchwords as " Secularise the State," " Dissociate Politics from Religion," " Separate Church and State," and the like, are mistaken. These phrases solve nothing, settle nothing, and recommend what is as impossible as to separate soul and body without producing death. The Church may contest the action of the State, and tyrannise over its subjects all the more for being in so-called separation from it. The Church necessarily acts on society with such power either for good or ill that it is of the highest importance that it should be for good. An enlightened, pure, and earnest Church, faithful to the principles and animated by the spirit of its Founder, is not less essential to the right organisation of society, and to the prosperity and progress of a nation than a good civil government. Individuals become through connection with it far more able to benefit their fellows and serve their country.

What have Socialists to propose regarding organisation in this sphere ? Nothing, certainly, of any value. The main body of them cherish the expectation of the disappearance of the Church. This only shows their inability and unwillingness to look at facts

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of further improvement, but this is not to say that the problem of their personal, moral, industrial, and social amelioration will be solved by facilitating for every one the breaking of the marriage tie ; we may rather look to solving it by restoring, perfecting, and generalising the external and moral conditions of the highest possible happiness in binding unions. This can be done without Social Democracy, and cannot be done with it. The new hetairism of Free Love reduces man to a refined animal, society to a refined herd, a superior race of dogs and apes, even though all should become productive labourers, and spend a few hours daily in manual labour." (" Impossibility of Social Democracy," pages 147-51.)

as they are. Even if a man disbelieves in the truth of Christianity he must be credulous to suppose that the power of the Christian Church will not continue to be felt for centuries. Other Socialists say, we shall treat religion as a private affair, and leave the Church to itself. That is so far good. The Church can only organise itself aright by working freely, and from within. Yet who that will reflect can fail to see how utterly inadequate a solution the answer is? It simply means that with a large portion of the work of social organisation Socialism acknowledges itself to be incompetent to deal. Socialism will let the Church alone, because conscious of its inability to deal with it consistently otherwise than in ways which would be deemed intolerant and oppressive. Socialists forget in this connection to ask, Will the Church let the socialistic commonwealth alone? Is neutrality possible between a religious and an atheistic society? Can a self-governed Church co-operate or even permanently coexist with a communistically or collectivistically governed State? Must the conditions on which a Free Church holds property not be irreconcilable with the laws by which a socialist State regulates property? In none of the more prevalent forms of contemporary Socialism is the Church contemplated as an enduring and influential agent of social amelioration.

Within the limits at my disposal it is impossible to treat of the process of organisation which, as a sequel to the latest extension of the electorate, is most visible at present—organisation in the direction of more local self-government, of a greater representation of the poorer classes in the management of municipal, parochial, and county affairs; in other words, organisation towards a fuller realisation of the democratic ideal, now supreme and dominant in political life. This process involves the devolution of power from a central legislature to bodies with more limited spheres of control and administration, and the more varied and vigorous development of representative government; but it is in no respect of a necessarily socialistic nature.

Nor can the organisation of science, art, and literature, as bearing on that of society, be discussed, intimate and comprehensive although the connection is. But manifestly such organisation should be chiefly brought about by the exertions of scientists, artists, and literary men themselves—*i.e.* by those most qualified to effect, and most directly interested in effecting it—and

only to a comparatively small extent by State regulation and encouragement.

Even as to industrial organisation my remarks must be few and brief. It can only be satisfactorily accomplished if effectuated chiefly from within by the free yet combined action of those who are specially engaged in industry. They have no right to expect that it will be done for them by the State, or at the expense of the community. There is no need that it should be done for them, as they have wealth and power enough to do it for themselves. Their own history is a conclusive proof, whatever Socialists may say to the contrary, of their power to combine, organise, and prosper under a régime of liberty.

It is greatly to be desired that there were more concerted and united action on the part of the employers of labour in the various departments of industry with a view to bringing their departments into a thoroughly sound condition; that capitalists and masters combined and co-operated, not merely for self-defence against the workers, but also on behalf of the workers, and for the general good of trade. It is obvious that they are strong enough and rich enough, if united and earnest, to remove some of the most grievous of the evils of which labour has to complain.

One of these is that exemplary men may, without any fault of their own, after a lifetime of toil, when strength fails, be left in utter destitution, solely dependent on public charity. Can it be supposed that the employers of labour in such departments as the coal and iron trade, paper-making and publishing, ship-building, brewing, etc., could not, if they would, remove this stain on the civilisation of a nation like Britain, and provide for their labourers in old age pensions which would be as honourable as those of the soldiers? In some departments a childless millionaire might do it at his death for the whole trade in which he had gained his fortune, and at the same time leave behind him a monument which would most honourably perpetuate his name.*

Then there is the evil of concurrent periods of protracted depression of trade and scarcity of employment, urgently calling for provision against it being made when trade is prosperous and

[* In recent years many employers of labour have inaugurated pension schemes, part of the contributions being supplied by the workers themselves and the other part by the employers.]

employment plenty; for a system of organised insurance which would carry those thrown out of work through the evil days. The burden of such a system should be borne partly by employers and partly by employed. What is to be aimed at is that in each industry all willing labourers should be saved from the degradation of becoming the recipients of charity. It is an aim which might in some respects be more satisfactorily realised by combined voluntary effort than by enforced taxation, although it is probably less likely to be so realised. Employers would act wisely were they freely to tax themselves, even to no small extent, in order to attain it.

The movement for compulsory labour-insurance against the evils involved in loss of work or of capacity for work is still far from advanced, yet it has within recent years made considerable progress in various countries of Europe. It has, in all probability, an important future before it, and in conjunction with the already established Savings Bank system, may greatly improve the position of the wage-earning classes. The principle on which it proceeds is not in itself socialistic, but rather the reverse; it is the principle of requiring of individuals, trades, or classes which can provide for themselves protection against the contingencies of evil to which they are specially exposed that they do so, instead of leaving the commonwealth to bear the burdens which must fall upon it from their not doing so. Long before Socialism took any interest in the principle it had been embodied in such institutions as the Scottish Ministers' Widows' Fund, etc.*

The various forms of co-operative production and industrial partnership which have been tried within the last eighty years are the beginnings of a perfectly legitimate movement which may be reasonably hoped to have a great future before it. Its aim—to make labourers also capitalists, sharers of profits as well as recipients of wages—is admirable. In principle it is unassailable. The difficulties impeding it are only difficulties of application, and arise from causes which the growth of intelligence and self-control, the spread of mutual confidence, the acquisition of commercial experience, and the increase of pecuniary means, will

[* Since the above was written there have been passed the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1897 and 1900, now repealed and extended by the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906.]

diminish. At the same time it is easy to form visionary hopes in regard to it. The goal at which it aims may be reached otherwise, and often better otherwise. While it can hardly be too earnestly desired that workmen in general should be also capitalists, there may be in many cases no special advantage in their being capitalists in the same business or concern in which they are workmen. It is the union of capital and labour in the same hands, in the same persons, which is the great point.*

One of the most interesting yet difficult of the themes connected with the industrial organisation of society is that of participation in the product of labour or profit-sharing by employés. It is plain that the condition of workmen must be greatly improved even in countries like our own before this system can become more than subordinate and supplemental to that of wages; but that in this latter form it may increasingly, and with ever-growing advantage, be introduced seems also certain. The regularity and certainty of the labourer's remuneration, which are the great merits of the wages-system, are necessarily gained at the expense of a concomitant variation in relation to demand and prices, which is also a merit, and which can only be secured through profit-sharing. Profit-sharing has many modes, none of them without defects or easy of successful adoption, but also none of them without advantages or incapable of being followed within certain limitations. As the great obstacle to the development of profit-sharing is the want of a right understanding and of sufficient trust between employers and employed, the extension of the system will be at least a good criterion of the progress of a truly harmonious social organisation.

Hitherto workmen have combined chiefly in order to secure favourable terms for labour in the struggle with capital. Such combination is necessary, yet far from the only kind of combination necessary to them. And one may well wish to see some combination of a higher and more constructive kind among them; more organisation for their general good, for purposes of intellectual

* For a statement of opposite views as to the relation of Co-operation and Socialism, see "Co-operation *v.* Socialism: being a report of a debate between H. H. Champion and B. Jones at Toynbee Hall." Manchester, 1887. As to Co-operation itself G. J. Holyoake's "History of Co-operation in England," and V. P. Hubert's "Associations Co-opératives en France et à l'Etranger" are specially instructive works.

and moral improvement, and even for rational amusement. The possibilities of organisation of this kind, far from having been exhausted by them, are as yet almost untouched. Workmen cannot too clearly realise that any institution or movement which will prove of much benefit to their class must either be their own work, or made their own by cordial co-operative appropriation. External help without self-help will come to little; and the self-help of a class, to be effective, must be earnest, general, and systematised.

It is not difficult to perceive where the crux of the problem of industrial organisation lies. In ordinary times steady, intelligent, skilled, efficient workmen are, in Britain at least, neither out of work nor wretchedly paid. They have fully proved that they can organise themselves; and owing to their organisation, numbers, and the importance of the services which they render to the community, they can give effective expression to their wishes as to wages, the duration of the working day, and other conditions of labour. They are probably as able to protect themselves as are their employers. They have manifestly outgrown the need for exceptional State-protection, for grandmotherly legislation. Such Socialism as Collectivists advocate, by restricting their liberty would only diminish their influence and power.

While there is a large amount of destitution among operatives, it is chiefly confined to two grades of them. First, there are those who, although willing to work, and to work diligently, bring to their work merely physical strength and an honest will, not intelligence and skill. Wherever there is a numerous and increasing population such workmen must be in constant danger of being greatly in excess of the demand for them. They are so now in this country. And hence there is in it a large body of men who are badly paid, hardly driven, sorely taken advantage of, preyed on by sweaters, misled by agitators, and easily capable of being stirred up to disorder, but feebly capable, or altogether incapable, of the sort of organisation which would really strengthen and profit them.

What is to be done as regards them? This is a crucial question. Socialism does not help us to answer it. It is obviously, for the most part, an essentially educational question. So educate all who are to become workmen that they will become, or at least be inexcusable if they do not become, intelligent and skilled workmen,

and the question will be answered as far as it can be answered. But free Britain can thus answer it just as well as a socialistic Britain could. And it is her manifest interest to apply all her intelligence and energy so to answer it; to make it a prime object of her policy to have all her workmen intelligent and skilled—better workmen than those of other countries. Of such workmen she can never have too many, or even a sufficient number; and such workmen can never be very badly paid in a free country. That she will ever perfectly solve the problem indicated I am not so optimistic as to suppose. I have little faith in absolute solutions in politics; I have much more confidence in what, to use mathematical phraseology, may be called *asymptotic* solutions—continual approximations to ideals never completely reached.

There is, secondly, a class of workmen whose destitution is mainly self-caused; mainly due to intemperance, to idleness, and to other forms of vice. It is impossible to follow in regard to them the advice of Mr. Herbert Spencer—"Do nothing; leave 'good-for-nothings' to perish." The human heart is not hard enough for that; and human society is not wholly guiltless of the faults even of the least worthy of its members. On the other hand, simply to give charity to the idle, the drunken, and the dissolute, is to increase the evil we deplore, and to divert charity from its proper objects. What is wanted is a system which will couple provision for the relief of the unworthy with conditions of labour and amendment, so that their appeals for charity can be refused with the knowledge that they have only to work and be sober in order not to starve. To devise an appropriate system of the kind is doubtless difficult, but surely it is not impossible.

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CHAPTER IX

SOCIALISM AND DEMOCRACY

IN the preceding pages I have especially had in view the Collectivism of Social Democracy, or, in other words, Democratic Socialism. Other forms of Socialism seem to me to be at present comparatively unimportant. Our age is a thoroughly democratic one. The democratic spirit pervades and moulds all our institutions; it raises up what is in accordance with it and casts down what is contrary to it; it confers life and inflicts death as it never did in any previous period of the world's history. Contemporary Socialism manifestly draws most of its strength from its alliance with Democracy. Not unnaturally it rests its hopes of success mainly on the full development of democratic principles and feelings; on the irresistible strength of the democratic movement. Its adherents hope to gain the masses to their views, and by the votes and power of the masses to carry these views into effect.

The connection between Socialism and Democracy being thus intimate and vital it is expedient to consider for a little Democracy in itself, and in its relation to Socialism.

What is Democracy? The etymology of the word yields as good an answer as we are likely to get. Democracy is rule or government by the people; it is the system of political order which every one who is held bound to conform to it has a share in forming and modifying. A community or nation is a Democracy when, according to its constitution and in real fact, the supreme governing authority, or rather the head source of political power, is not an individual or a class but the community or nation itself as a whole. Such is the general idea of Democracy, the principle on which it rests and in which it moves, the end or goal to which it tends, the ideal in the realising of which it can alone find satisfaction, self-consistency, and completeness.

But it is only an idea or ideal. The ideal has never been manifested on earth in any social form. There has never existed a pure and complete Democracy, any more than a pure and complete

Monarchy or Aristocracy. Every actual government is mixed. There have been many communities called Democracies; but they have all been only more or less democratic. The ancient "Democracies" were not States governed by the people. They were governments in the hands of the poorer classes of the people—the classes which had wrenched power from the richer classes, yet who denied freedom to multitudes of slaves. In other words, they were class governments. But government by a class is essentially incompatible with a true notion of Democracy, rule by the people, not by any class or classes of it, rich or poor.

Nor has the democratic idea ever fully actualised itself in modern times. Our own country has been gradually becoming democratic, and is now somewhat strongly democratic; but it is in no sense strictly a Democracy. Large numbers of the people have still not even an indirect share in the government of the country. If every person is entitled to even such a share in it, our most advanced politicians have not been very zealous in promoting the rights of their fellow-citizens. We are still far from manhood suffrage; and manhood suffrage is, as regards the suffrage, only half-way to the democratic ideal; for all women are people, and if every man has a right to vote as one of the people so has every woman.

When we get, if we ever get, to manhood and womanhood suffrage, then, but only then, shall we be strictly a Democracy; and even then only in what may be called the lower sense of the term. The government of the country will then be indirectly in the hands of the people. The electorate will be coextensive with the people. Every one will have a share in the legislation of the nation to the extent of having a vote in the appointment of one of its legislators.

But will the attainment of this be a full realisation of the idea of Democracy, or likely to satisfy the desires of Democracy? The ancient Democracies were much more democratic than that, and far from so easily satisfied. In them the people directly governed. The citizens of Athens were all members, and even paid members, of its government. They had vastly more influence on the internal and external politics of Athens than the parliamentary electors of Britain have on the politics of Britain. Of course, this was chiefly owing to the comparative smallness of the territory and the comparative fewness of the citizens of Athens. The direct government of extensive and populous countries by the whole mass of their

citizens is obviously impossible. That a very large number of the inhabitants of Britain, France, and the United States have any share at all in the government of their respective nations is owing to the elaboration of that great political instrument, the system of representation.

But the representative system is no development of the idea of Democracy; on the contrary, it is an obvious and enormous limitation or restriction of it. If Democracy is the entirely and exclusively legitimate form or species of government it cannot consistently adopt the representative system at all. It cannot reasonably be expected to be content to serve merely as the means of choosing an aristocracy. If the democratic idea is an absolute and complete truth, if the central principle of its creed, the equal right of all to a share in the government of their country, is an absolute and inalienable right, not an equal share for each man in an election merely, but an equal share in the entire government of the country is the ideal which every thorough-going democrat must have in view.

It is one, however, which is manifestly unattainable not only in the form of personal participation in the government of countries like those of modern Europe, but even through the methods of representation adopted by the most democratic of these countries. How, then, can a Democracy which has a thorough and unqualified belief in the justice of its own claims and in the certainty and completeness of their realisation act in accordance with its faith and vindicate its pretensions?

The way in which it is most certain to try so to act is to endeavour to minimise representation, and to substitute for it, so far as possible, mere delegation; or, in other words, it is to insist that its legislators and functionaries shall be wholly its servants and instruments; that their judgments and acts shall be simply the reflections and expressions of its own mind and will. Such is the goal to which from its very nature the absolute democratic idea strives and tends. In this country we are already to such an extent democratic that the strain of the movement towards it is distinctly felt. No intelligent observer, I think, can have failed to perceive that the House of Commons is not unexposed to a danger which cannot be warded off by any forms of procedure, rules, or laws of its own—the danger of losing its deliberative independence, of becoming a body of mere

mandatories, not free to judge according to reason and conscience, but constrained to decide solely according to the wishes of their constituents. It is as apparent, however, that we should beware of this danger. When the electors of this country fancy themselves competent to give mandates regarding the mass of matters which must be dealt with by its Legislature, common sense must have entirely forsaken them. When they find men willing to legislate as their mere mandatories on affairs of national importance, patriotism must have become extinct among our so-called politicians. And should government by mandate ever be established, such government must of its very nature be so blind, weak, and corrupt that it will be of short duration. Besides, government by delegates is as incompatible as government by representatives with the direct participation of the people in the government, or, in other words, with a full realisation of the democratic ideal of government.

Hence certain fervent democrats in France, Spain, and Russia have advocated the splitting up of Europe into a multitude of communes sufficiently small to allow all the adult inhabitants to take a direct share in their government. These communes, they believe, would freely federate into natural groups, and in process of time form not only a United States of Europe, but a Confederation of Humanity. Insensate as this scheme is, it is not unconnected with the democratic ideal of equality; and it rests on a faith in the possibilities and merits of Home Rule and Federation which is at present in many minds far in excess of reason. A real and vital union when attained or attainable is always to be preferred to mere confederation. A sense of the equal right of all to rule which cannot tolerate representative government will not find full satisfaction in a delegative government, nor even in the direct and independent home rule of a small commune; it must demand, if not the absolute equality, at least the nearer approximation to it of self-rule, the rejection of all authoritative and parliamentary, social and public government. Beyond democratic Communism or Collectivism there is democratic Anarchism, the anarchist Communism or Collectivism, which leaves every man to be a law unto himself and, so far as his power extends, unto his neighbour; which declares that everything belongs equally to every one, and nothing specially to any one, and which discards every idea of reverence and obedience.

What precedes naturally leads us to ask, Is the democratic idea an absolute and complete truth? Is the principle of equality on which Democracy rests the expression of an absolute and inalienable right? Is a thoroughly self-consistent and fully developed Democracy a possible thing? Is it a desirable thing? Is Democracy the only legitimate form of government? Is it necessarily or always the best government?

These are questions which, with full conviction, I answer in the negative. But I have to add that the democratic idea is truer and less incomplete than any rival idea of government; that the principle of equality on which Democracy rests is not moving and swaying the modern mind so widely and powerfully as it does without reason or justification, any more than the idea of unity which built up the monarchies of Europe and the mediæval Church worked without a purpose and mission in earlier centuries: that not only is no other government more legitimate or more desirable than Democracy, but that every other government does its duty best when it prepares the way for a reasonable and well-conditioned Democracy; and that although Democracy, far from being necessarily good, may be the worst of all governments, it can be so only through the perversion of powers which ought to make it the best of all governments.

It may be necessary that one man should rule a community with almost unlimited and uncontrolled power; but it can only be so in evil times. The rule of a few may often be better than the rule of many, for the few may be fit and the many unfit; but that is itself a vast misfortune, and every addition to the number of the fit is assuredly great gain. That the rule of one should give place to the rule of some, and the rule of some to the rule of all, if the rule is at last as efficacious and righteous as at first, is progress; whereas to go from the rule of all towards that of one alone is to retrograde. A government in which any class of the people has no share is almost certain to be a government unjust or ungenerous to that class of the people, and, therefore, to that extent a bad government. It may in certain circumstances be foolish and wrong to extend political power to all; but it is always a duty to promote whatever tends to make those from whom such power is withheld entitled to possess it, by making them able to use it wisely and rightly. In this sense and to this extent every man, it seems to me, is bound to

be the servant and soldier of Democracy. The true goal of life for each of us in any sphere of existence is not our own selfish good, or the good of any class or caste, but the good of all; and so the goal at which each of us ought to aim in political life is the good government of all, by the association and co-operation of all, in the spirit expressed and demanded by these words of Jesus: "Let him who would be the first among you make himself the servant of all."

It is a duty, then, to work towards, and on behalf of, Democracy; but only towards, and on behalf of, a Democracy which knows its own limitations, which perceives that its distinctive truth is not the whole truth, and that, therefore, to be exclusive and thoroughly self-consistent and complete, instead of being an obligation under which it lies, is a danger against which it must always be anxiously on its guard.

The truth distinctive of Democracy, I have said, is not the whole truth of government. The truth in Monarchy, the necessity of unity of rule and administration, of a single, centralising, presiding Will, is also a great and important truth. In all times of violence and of discord it has come to be felt as the supreme want of society. Wherever Democracy rushes into extremes there sets in a reaction towards unity in excess, the unity of despotism.

The truth in the idea of Aristocracy, the truth that there must always be in society those who lead and those who follow, and that it is of almost incalculable moment for a people that those who lead it be those who are ablest to lead it, its men of greatest power, energy, and insight, its wisest and best men, is likewise a truth which will never cease to be of quite incalculable value. The nation which does not feel it to be so, which fails to give due place and respect to those endowed with the gifts of real leadership, and accepts instead as good enough to lead it empty and pretentious men, flattering and designing men, demagogues and intriguers, is a nation which will become well acquainted with ditches and pitfalls, with misfortune and sorrow.

Theocracy as a distinct positive form of government has almost everywhere passed away; but the idea which gave rise to it, the idea that the ultimate regulative law of society is not the will of any man or of any number of men but of God, that every people ought to feel and acknowledge itself to be under the sovereignty

of God, has in it a truth which cannot pass away, whoever may abandon it, betray it, or rise up against it. It is a truth with which society cannot dispense. A people which deems its own will a sufficient law to itself, which does not acknowledge a divine and inviolable law over itself, will soon experience that it has stripped itself of all protection from its own arbitrariness and injustice. Only in the name of a Will superior to all human wills can man protest with effect against human arbitrariness and tyranny. Recognition of the sovereignty of God can alone save us from that slavery to man which is degrading; whether it is slavery to one master or to many, to despotic kings or despotic majorities.

In the interests, then, of Democracy itself we ought to combat Democracy in so far as it is exclusive, narrow, intolerant; in so far as it will not acknowledge and accept the truths in other forms of government.

Democracy may tend to be, but is not bound to be, republican. A constitutional monarch may be the safest sort of president. From a democratic point of view the general and abstract argumentation in favour of Monarchy may seem unsatisfactory, and yet the Monarchy of a particular country may have such a place in its history and constitution, and such a hold on the imaginations and affections of its people, that no democrat of sane and sober mind will set himself to uproot and destroy it, and so to sacrifice the tranquillity of a people for the triumph merely of a narrow dogma.

More than this, whatever a Democracy may call itself, it must be so far monarchical, so far add the truth and virtue of Monarchy to its own, that there shall be no lack of unity, strength, or order in its action either at home or abroad. It will not prosper in the struggle for existence unless it function with the consistency and effectiveness of a single, central sovereign Will. If through any fault of Democracy the loyal, law-abiding citizens of Britain are allowed to suffer violence and wrong from the lawless and disloyal, and still more if through any fault of Democracy Britain should have to endure defeat and humiliation from a foreign enemy, the result must inevitably be an indignant and patriotic revulsion towards a more efficient and anti-democratic government. Hence every wise friend of the cause of Democracy in this land, as well as every lover of his country, will sternly discountenance all

tendencies which would lead the Democracy of Britain to sympathise with lawlessness or to be indifferent as to the naval supremacy and military power of Britain.

Again, in so far as a Democracy fails to provide for itself a true Aristocracy—raises to leadership not its ablest, wisest, and best, but the incompetent and unworthy—it must be held not to satisfy the requirements of good government. I doubt very much whether Democracy in Britain is satisfying this requirement at present. I should be surprised to learn that in the House of Commons there are as many as forty men of remarkable political insight or ability. It has been said, and there can be little doubt accurately said, that were the average of intellect in the Royal Society of London not greater than that in the House of Commons, British science would be the contempt of the world. Yet legislation, not less than science, can only be successfully engaged in by persons of exceptional brain power and thoroughly trained intellects. To be quite candid, however, I must add that what is most to be desiderated in our political rulers is not so much brain power as moral fibre; not intellectual capacity but integrity.

On the only occasion on which I met J. S. Mill I heard him say, "I entered Parliament with what I thought the lowest possible opinion of the average member, but I left it with one much lower." Parliament has certainly not improved since Mr. Mill's time, and especially morally. The more indistinct the principles, and the more effaced the lines of action on which the old parties proceeded are becoming, the more the advantages of party government are decreasing and the more its latent evils are coming to light. Already the struggle of politics is largely a conscious sham, an ignoble farce, the parties pretending to hold different principles in order not to acknowledge that they have only different interests. Our whole political system is thus pervaded with dishonesty. What would in any other sphere be regarded as lying is in politics deemed permissible, or even praiseworthy. Ordinary parliamentary candidates have of late years shown themselves unprecedentedly servile and untrustworthy. A large majority of the House of Commons are of use merely as voting machines, but without independence of judgment, sensibility of conscience, or anxiety to distinguish between good and bad in legislation or administration. The House of Commons has during the last twenty-five

years greatly degenerated. And it is still plainly on the down grade.

Is there any remedy? None, I believe, of a short or easy kind. No merely political change will do much good; such a change as that of the payment of members, one very likely to be made before long, cannot fail to do harm. The House of Commons has been reformed so much and so often without becoming better, if not with becoming worse, that all of us should by this time see that the only real way of improving it is by improving ourselves; by each elector being more independent, serious, and careful in the choice of his representative; more able to judge, and more conscientious in judging of his ability, force of character, and general soundness of view, while not expecting him to think entirely as he himself does, or wishing him to abnegate the reason and conscience by the independent exercise of which alone he can either preserve his self-respect or be of use to his country.

The House of Lords, unlike the House of Commons, might obviously be greatly improved by direct reform. The time can hardly be far off when no man will be allowed to fill the office of a legislator merely because he is the son of his father. The House of Lords needs reform, however, not with a view to rendering it more dependent or less influential; but in order to make it, through selection from within and election from without the peerage, if less purely aristocratic in the conventional sense, more aristocratic in the true sense; so that not less but more ability, wisdom, and independence, not less but more eminence and influence may be found in it.

With only one House of Legislature, with a merely single-chambered Parliament, the nation would probably soon be among the breakers. Those who would rather end than mend our Upper House are either very thoughtless persons, or persons who desire to see revolution and confiscation. No large self-governing nation can wisely dispense with such a safeguard against its own possible imprudence and precipitancy as is afforded by the system of two legislative chambers.

The Crown has in this country been gradually stripped of every vestige of the power by which it can check or control Parliament. There is not in Britain, as in the United States, a Supreme Court of Justice independent of the Legislature and entitled to pronounce

null and void any law which the Legislature may pass if it sets aside the obligations of free contract or contravenes any of the rights guaranteed in the Constitution of the United States as essential rights of men. We have no written constitution, no definite constitution. The late Mr. Gladstone affirmed, without having been, so far as I am aware, contradicted, that Parliament is omnipotent, or without limits to its right of action. If so, and I imagine it is so, we are a free people living under a theoretically pure despotism. If so, Parliament has an unlimited right to do wrong. Of course, confronting such a right there is a higher right, however unconstitutional it may be, the inalienable right of men to resist unjust laws, and to punish, in accordance with justice, the authors of them. Our political constitution, however, being so indeterminate that the uttermost parliamentary arbitrariness has no other boundary or barrier than insurrection, there is all the greater need that our Upper House should rest on a firmer and broader basis than it does; and that in both Houses of Parliament there should be a great number of truly wise and eminent men, real leaders of the people, and fewer ignoble persons, mere sham leaders.

When the two Chambers or Houses of Parliament irreconcilably differ in opinion on questions of grave importance, it seems proper that the nation itself should decide between them, and that provision should be made for its doing so otherwise than through a dissolution of Parliament and a general election. A general election, indeed, in the present state of political morality in this country, makes almost impossible the honest submission of a special question, however important, to the national judgment. It gives every opportunity to either or both of the conflicting political parties to confuse and pervert public opinion on the question in dispute by connecting it with other questions, raising side issues, and appealing to all varieties of prejudice and of selfishness. The way in which the British people has been thus befooled in recent years is deplorable. In certain circumstances a clear and specific referendum to the people would, perhaps, be the best method of settling a disputed political question; but recourse to it in other than rare and very special cases in such a country as Britain could hardly fail to have harmful consequences.*

* The chapter in Laveleye's "Democratie" on "direct government by the referendum" is valuable owing to the amount of information which it

To proceed: no form of government can so little afford to dispense with the essential truth of the theocratic idea as Democracy. The more the suffrage is extended, the more political power is diffused, the more necessary it becomes, so far as the political order and progress, security and welfare of a nation is concerned, that a sense of responsibility to God should prevail throughout the nation. A Democracy in which the masses are irreligious must be a specially bad government and is specially likely to destroy itself. If a people is without faith in an eternal and invisible God, how can it have a reasonable faith in an eternal and invisible law of right and duty which is no mere expression of material fact or creation of human will? And if it has not faith in such a law, what rule can it devise as a standard for its own legislation or for its own obedience? Will it take might for right, and bow before accomplished fact, whatever it may be? Surely that would be too monstrous. Will it be content with whatever a majority decides, with whatever is the national will? But the mere will of a majority is no more binding on reason or conscience than that of a minority; the mere will of a nation is no more sacred than that of an individual; mere will is not righteous will, but may be either a tyrannical or a slavish will. If a nation makes laws merely for its own convenience, why should not any individual break them for his own convenience? Will tendency to produce happiness or utility be a sufficient guide as to what laws should be made and obeyed? No, for that, too, leaves conscience untouched, cannot summon to self-sacrifice, must end in a reign of selfishness. Only the recognition of law as that which has its seat in the bosom of God can make men at once free from law as a law of bondage and willingly subject to it as the law of their own true life,—as the law of order, justice, and love, which gathers men into societies, and unites them into one great brotherhood.

The distinctive and favourite principle of Democracy is Equality. All men are equal and have equal rights. To the extent of the truth in it this principle is valuable. Faith in it has achieved great things; it has inspired men to assail arbitrary pretensions and privileges, and to put an end to many unjust and injurious inequalities. Its

contains as to its operation in Switzerland. The conditions of Switzerland, however, as Laveleye himself points out, are exceptionally favourable to this kind of government.

mission for good is doubtless far from as yet exhausted. But no one ought to allow himself to become the slave even of a great idea, or to follow it a step further than reason warrants. And the idea of equality is very apt to be the object of an exaggerated and impure passion. In countless instances the desire for equality is identical with envy; with the evil eye and grudging heart which cannot bear to contemplate the good of others.

The principle of equality is one not of absolute but of relative truth. It has only a conditioned and limited validity. There is, indeed, only one sort of equality which is strictly a right: namely, civil equality, equality before the law, the equal right of every man to justice. And it is a right only because the law must have due respect to circumstances and conditions; because justice itself is not equality but proportion, rewarding or punishing according to the measure of merit or demerit. Political equality, equality as to property, and religious equality, unless simply applications of this equality, simply forms of justice, are misleading fictions which make equality what it never ought to be—a substitute for justice, or the formula of justice, or the standard of justice. Political equality affirmed as an absolute principle can only mean that every man has a right to an equal share in the government of the country; in other words, it can only mean political anarchy. Equality in property, similarly conceived of, necessarily implies communism, and a communism as inconsistent with even the nationalisation of property as with its individual appropriation; in equivalent terms, it is destructive of the very nation and incompatible with the very existence of property. Religious equality viewed as a separate and independent right must signify that for the State there is no difference between religion and irreligion, Christianity and Atheism; that for the State religion has no interest, no being. All such equalities when presented as additional to civil equality, the equality of all men before the law, the equal right of all men to justice, are illusory and pernicious; they have worth and sacredness only as included in it.

The arbitrary exclusion, indeed, of any class of the community from political activity is a wrong to that class. For every exclusion adequate reasons ought to be producible, and the sooner the need for it can be done away with the better. As regards the suffrage

no reason either of expediency or of principle can now be consistently urged in this country against extending it to the utmost, as it has already been granted even to illiterates. Rightly or wrongly, we have already gone so far as to have left ourselves hardly any real or even plausible reason for refusing any serious claim to its further extension, its virtual universalisation. Resistance to any such claim can only be based on invidious grounds, and can have no other effect than to cause a very natural irritation.

Granting to every person a vote, however, is by no means to acknowledge that every person is politically equal to every other, and still less is it actually to create political equality. It is a concession that the admission of all to the suffrage is reasonable in the circumstances, not that it is right in itself. It is quite consistent with a denial of any right of the kind; quite consistent with the affirmation that no one has any right to exercise so important a function as the suffrage if he cannot do it rightly, *i.e.*, to the benefit of the nation. A nation which adopts universal suffrage is perfectly entitled to devise counterpoises which will remove or lessen any evils incidental to the system. While leaving universal suffrage intact, it may quite consistently provide for special representation of labour, trade, and commerce, of science, art, and education, and, in a word, of all the chief institutions and interests of the commonwealth. It may recognise the importance of the fullest possible development of the freedom of individuals, yet recognise also the folly and falsehood of the notion that the nation is only the sum of its individual units; and may, in consequence, strive so to combine corporative with individual representation as will preserve Democracy from rushing into a ruinous Individualism, or becoming the prey of Socialism.

There is valid reason for complaint of inequality, in the sense of partiality and injustice, as regards property, if all are not alike free to acquire or to dispose of it; if any exceptional or special impediments are put in the way of any class of persons either as to its purchase or its sale. This admission, however, is far from equivalent to the affirmation of that equality of right as to property which would logically prevent the profitable use of it by any one. There is no right to equal participation in property, but only a right not to be inequitably prevented from participation in it. The State is consequently not entitled to enforce or to aim at an

equal distribution of property. Its function is to do justice, neither more nor less; and the sphere of justice as to property is merely that of equal freedom to acquire and to use it.

The State may err and do unjustly by favouring one class of religious opinions and discouraging another. In the name of Christianity it may act in a very unchristian way towards atheists and other non-christians. It is bound to respect the conscientious convictions of the least of associations and of every single individual. It may provide that no man shall be excluded from Parliament because of atheism or disbelief in Christianity, and yet hold that it thereby only shows a just, a generous, and a Christian spirit. Nothing in what has just been said implies that for the State religion and irreligion, Christianity and atheism, are equal; or is even inconsistent with maintaining that for the State no difference, no distinction is more profound and vital than that between religion and irreligion; that the distinction between virtue and vice is not more so; that the distinction between knowledge and ignorance is not so much so. It is of small importance to the State whether its citizens are taught algebra or not in comparison with whether or not they are imbued with the spirit and principles of the Gospel. A State cannot fail to feel itself bound to provide for the teaching of the religion in which it believes, unless it can get the duty done for it by the spontaneous zeal of its members. Were there no separate Christian Church, a sincerely Christian State would inevitably undertake itself to discharge the duties of a Church, and so transform itself into a Church-State or State-Church, in which Church and State would be only functionally, not substantively distinct.

There is another respect in which every patriotic man and true friend of Democracy must seek to guard against the one-sidedness of the especially democratic principle. He must be careful to distinguish between arbitrary and artificial inequalities and essential and natural inequalities. The more ready he may be to assail, to diminish, to cast down the former, the more anxious should he be to defend, and to allow free play and full development to the latter. Equality of conditions is not an end which ought to be aimed at. It is a low and false ideal. The realisation of it, were it possible, which it fortunately is not, would be an immense calamity. It would bring with it social stagnation and extinction. Mankind must develop or die, and development involves differentiation,

unlikeness, inequality. The only equality which can benefit society is the equality of justice and of liberty. Let equality be regarded as a truth or good in itself; let it be divorced from justice and opposed to liberty; let the free working of the powers in regard to which men are unequal be repressed, in order that those who are of mean natures may have no reason to be jealous of any of their fellows; and society must soon be all a low and level plain, and one which continually tends to sink instead of to rise, for it is just through the operation of natural inequalities that the general level of society is always being raised in progressive communities. The material wealth, the intellectual acquisitions, and the moral gains which constitute the riches of mankind at the present day would never have been won and accumulated if the manifold special energies and aptitudes of individuals, if all natural inequalities, had not been allowed free scope.

The direst foe of Democracy has been excess of party spirit. When moderated by, and subordinated to, patriotism, the conflict of parties may be healthful and stimulating. It has thus been often largely conducive to the growth and prosperity of democratic States. But it has generally ruined them in the end; and, perhaps, it will always succeed in ruining them. For it tends to become increasingly less honest and more selfish; to grow keen and embittered as a struggle for power and its advantages in proportion as it ceases to have meaning and to be ennobled by faith in principles or generous ideals.

Besides, while in every Democracy there will be a struggle of political parties, parties will always feel that they need organisation, and organisation must be effected and developed through associations. But unless political intelligence, independence, and zeal are general in a community, political associations may easily become the seats of wire-pullers, adroit enough to juggle the mass of the people out of their rights, to dictate to Parliament what it shall do, and to subject what ought to be a great and free Democracy to the sway of a number of petty and intriguing oligarchies. The greatest Democracy on earth—that of the United States of America—has submitted to be misrepresented, deceived, and plundered in the most shameless and humiliating manner by its political committees. It has known their character, it has despised them, it has groaned over their doings; but somehow it has not been

able to deliver itself from them. It has needed for its emancipation from their power and methods more moral and political virtue than it possessed. Only of late years has it attempted to resist and restrain them.

A great deal of labour, and wisdom, and virtue, in fact, are needed in order that Democracy may be a success. Although at its conceivable best Democracy would be the best of all forms of Government, it may not only be the worst of all Governments, but is certainly the most difficult form of Government to maintain good, and still more to make nearly perfect. It demands intelligence, effort, self-restraint, respect for the rights and regard for the interest of others, morality, patriotism, and piety in the community as a whole. Without the general diffusion of these qualities among those who share in it, it easily passes into the most degenerate sort of Government.

This is why history is the record of so many Democracies which have deceived all hopes based on them, and failed ignominiously. It is why they have so frequently reverted into absolute Monarchies and Oligarchies. It is why they have so often passed through a state of agitation and disorder into one of lethargic subjection to despotic rule.

Democracy can only succeed through the energy, intelligence, and virtue of the general body of its members; through their successful resistance to temptations, their avoidance of dangers, their resolute overcoming of difficulties, their self-restraint and discipline, their moral and religious sincerity and earnestness. From Plato downwards all who have intelligently speculated on Democracy have seen that the problem on the solution of which its destiny depends is essentially an educational problem. A Democracy can only endure and flourish if the individuals who compose it are in a healthy intellectual, moral, and religious condition.

In the foregoing remarks I have insisted mainly on the limitations of the democratic principle, and on the dangers to which Democracy is, from its very nature, exposed. To have dwelt on its strong points would have been, so far as my present object is concerned, irrelevant; and it is, besides, work which is constantly being done, and even overdone, by gentlemen who are in search of parliamentary honours, and by many other smooth-tongued flatterers of the people. As I have sought, however, to indicate the limitations, weaknesses,

and dangers of Democracy, I may very possibly be charged with taking a pessimistic view of its fortunes and its future. I do not admit the applicability of the charge.

History does not present an adequate inductive basis from which to infer either optimism or pessimism. Although faith that the course of humanity is determined by Divine Providence implies also faith in that course leading to a worthy goal, this falls short of optimism, while manifestly incompatible with pessimism. That the democratic ideal of Government contains on the whole more truth than any of its rival ideals, and that it has, for at least two centuries, been displacing them and realising itself at their expense in the leading nations of the world, may warrant in some measure the hope that in the long run it will universally and definitively prevail, provided it appropriates and assimilates the truths which have given to other ideals their vitality and force; but between such a vague and modest hope as this and any attempt at a confident or precise forecasting of the fate of Democracy there is a vast distance. Whether it will finally triumph or not, and, if it does, when, or in what form, or after what defeats, it is presumption in any man to pretend to *know*. No mortal can even approximately tell what its condition will be in any country of Europe a thousand, or a hundred, or even fifty years hence.

No one can be certain, for instance, whether its future in Britain will be prosperous or disastrous, glorious or the reverse. The future of Britain itself is too uncertain to allow of any positive forecast in either direction being reasonable. The ruin of Britain may be brought about at any time by quite possible combinations of the other great military and naval powers. The British people may also quite possibly so behave as to cause the ruin of their country. Those who profess unbounded trust in the British people, or in any people, are the successors of the false prophets of Israel, and of the demagogic deceivers of the people in all lands and ages. They belong to a species of persons which has ruined many a Democracy in the past; and there is no certainty that they will not destroy Democracy in Britain or in any other country where it at present prevails.

On the other hand, there is nothing to forbid the hope that Democracy in Britain will have a lengthened, successful, and beneficent career. Why should it listen to flatterers or believe lies?

Why should it not, while asserting and obtaining its rights, keep within those limits of Nature and of reason which cannot be disregarded with impunity? Why should it not recognise its weaknesses and guard against them? Why should it not discern its dangers and avoid them? Why should it not be prudent, self-restrained, just, tolerant, moral, patriotic, and reverent? Why should it not strive after noble ends and reach them by the right means and by well-devised measures? I know not why it should not. Therefore I shall not anticipate that it will not.

This is certain, however, that if Democracy in Britain or elsewhere is to have a grand career, it must work for it vigorously and wisely. It will not become powerful, or prosperous, without toil and thought; not through merely wishing to become so, or even through any amount of striving to become so, which is not in accordance with economic, moral, and spiritual laws. It will not become so, if it adopts the dogmas of Socialism; for, these are, alike as regards the conduct and concerns of the material, moral, and religious life of communities, so false and pernicious that Democracy by accepting them cannot fail to injure or destroy itself.

The creed of Social Democracy is the only socialistic creed which requires in this connection to be considered. It is substantially accepted by the immense majority of contemporary Socialists. The really socialistic groups which dissent from it are of comparatively small dimensions and feeble influence. Is it, then, the expression of a faith on which Democracy can be reasonably expected to endure or to prosper?

Certainly not as regards the distinctive economic tenets which it contains. The views to which Social Democracy has committed itself on the nature of economic laws, on value and surplus value, on competition and State-control, on labour and wages, on capital and interest, on money, on inheritance, on the nationalisation of land, on the collectivisation of wealth, and other kindred subjects, are of a kind which cannot stand examination. Some of them have been dealt with in previous chapters, and have been shown to be erroneous and unrealisable. The others are of a like character.

The economic doctrine of Social Democracy is thoroughly anti-scientific wherever it is peculiar or distinctive. It has been widely

accepted, but only by those who were predisposed and anxious to believe it; not by impartial and competent economists, nor any other students of it who have made their assent dependent on proof. It owes its success not to the validity of the reasons advanced for its doctrines, but to the widespread dissatisfaction of the working-classes with their condition; or, as Dr. Bonar expresses it, to their "belief that they are now the tools of the other classes and yet worth all the rest."*

This state of feeling, however it may be accounted for, is of itself a very serious fact, and will be lightly regarded only by the foolish. Whatever is just and reasonable in it should find a generous response. For whatever is pathological in it, an appropriate remedy should be sought. Its prevalence should produce general anxiety for the material, intellectual, and moral amelioration of the classes in which it threatens to become chronic. But it will never be either satisfied or cured by concessions to, or applications of, the economic nostrums of Social Democracy. To fancy that it will is the same absurdity as to imagine that a fevered patient may be restored to restfulness and health by complying with the distempered cravings and exciting and confirming the delirious illusions which are the effects and symptoms of his malady.

According to the teaching of Social Democracy there are no natural laws in the economic sphere, and especially in that of the distribution of wealth, but only laws which are the creations of the human will, made by society and imposed on itself. But this teaching is the reverse of true, and it directly encourages men to expect from society what it cannot give them, and necessarily embitters them against it for not bestowing on them what is impossible. According to the same teaching labour is the sole cause of value, and the labouring classes alone are entitled to all wealth. This is no less false, and it equally tends to spread in a portion of the community unwarrantable hatred against another portion, and to generate extravagant expectations in connection with proposals of the most mischievous kind. The suppression of the wage-system, as recommended by Socialism, could not fail to destroy the chief industrial enterprises of a country like Britain; the abolition of money would paralyse its commerce. The measures of confiscation advocated by it under the names of expropriation, nationalisation,

* "Philosophy and Political Economy," p. 353.

and collectivisation, would take away indispensable stimuli to exertion and prudence, individuality and inventiveness, and so end in general impoverishment and misery. The social unrest of which Socialism is the symptom cannot be allayed with doses of Socialism either pure or diluted. The distinctive economic tenets of Socialism are fatal economic errors. But it is only on economic truths that economic well-being can be founded. And this applies in an even special degree to democratic societies as being self-governing societies, or, in other words, societies ruled by public opinion, and, therefore, societies in which it is of the utmost importance that public opinion should be true opinion.

The ethics of Social Democracy will come under consideration in the next chapter, and therefore it is only requisite to say here that it is not better than its economics. It is an ethics which treats individual morality as almost a matter of indifference, and which fatally sacrifices individual rights to social authority. Its teaching as to domestic relations and duties is unhealthy. The justice inculcated by it is largely identical with what is commonly and properly meant by injustice. Such a moral doctrine must be pernicious to the life of any society, but especially to that of a democratic society. All who have thought seriously on forms of government and of society have recognised that the democratic form is the one which makes the largest demand for the personal and domestic virtue of its members; the one to the security and strength of which the general prevalence of settled and correct conceptions of justice is the most absolutely indispensable. It is to an exceptional degree true of democratic societies that in them the social problem is a moral problem. A Democracy pervaded by the ethical principles of Social Democracy must soon become disorganised and putrid.

Social Democracy has been able to inspire large numbers of men with a sincerity and strength of faith, and an intensity of zeal seldom to be found dissociated from religion. Hence, perhaps, in a loose way it may be spoken of as religious. Of religion, however, in the ordinary sense of the term it has none. It acknowledges no Supreme Being other than the State or Society; no worship but that of Leviathan. Its cult is identical with its polity. It rests on a materialistic view of the universe and of life, and recognises no other good than such as is of an earthly and temporary

nature. It is not merely indifferent to religion but positively hostile to it. It not only despises it as superstition, but hates it as the support of tyranny and the instrument of severity. Its motto might be that of Blanqui, *Ni Dieu ni maître.* If it triumphs, another age of religious persecution will have to be traversed. But reason and history alike lead us to believe that faith in God and reverence for God's law are essential to the welfare of societies; that any people which accepts a materialistic and atheistic doctrine condemns itself to anarchy or slavery, to a brief and ignoble career. What it calls liberty will be licentiousness, and the more of it it possesses, the shorter will be its course of self-destruction. On this subject, however, I need not dwell as I shall have to treat of Socialism in relation to religion in a subsequent chapter.

Socialism, it may now be perceived, is dangerous to Democracy, inasmuch as it tends to foster and intensify what is partial and exclusive in the democratic ideal. It urges it on to reject the truth which gave significance and vitality to the theocratic ideal. It is anti-monarchical, and will only tolerate a republican form of government even where monarchy would be practically preferable. It errs as much through jealousy of social inequalities as Aristocracy does through pride in them. It strives after social equality as a good in itself, even when it is an equality only to be obtained by levelling down, by general compression. In this respect it is peculiarly dangerous in a democracy because it seduces it through its chief weakness. Where each man has some share in government, many are apt to think all should have an equal share. The ordinary mind is rarely just towards the exceptional mind. Average human nature may be easily persuaded to aid in pulling down whatever seems to it so high as to overshadow itself.

Socialism is jealous even of the inequality necessarily implied in the parliamentary system, and hence does not interest itself in the real improvement of the system. The parliament of a nation ought to be truly representative of the nation as an organic whole, of the steady, persistent will and general pervading reason of the commonwealth, and not merely of fluctuating majorities gained by election tricks. But a parliament thus representative is one naturally very difficult to secure, and, perhaps, especially so, when the democratic spirit is dominant. Democracy arrived at a certain stage of development demands universal suffrage; and the claim

may be one which neither ought to be nor can be refused. But universal suffrage will never of itself ensure to a nation a true parliamentary representation of it as a whole, or in the entirety of its interests. It can only yield a representation of individuals; and the governmental majority which results from it may conceivably be a majority of one and may even have been returned by a minority of the electors. Education, art, science, and other great national interests may be left wholly unrepresented in the legislative body. Interests too strong politically to be left altogether unrepresented may only be represented in a one-sided way. Does Socialism warn Democracy of its danger in this respect, or suggest to it any remedy for the evil? On the contrary, it encourages that excessive confidence in the virtues of universal suffrage which generally prevails in democratic communities, and still more the excessive and equally prevalent jealousy of any representation over and above that of individuals alone.

Yet Socialism has not like common Democracy any admiration of the parliamentary system. Probably no class of persons estimates the worth of our time-serving politicians at a lower figure, or is less deceived by them, than Socialists. The socialistic criticism of parliamentaryism has always been of a searching and unsparing kind, not lacking in truth, but erring on the side of severity. It has, however, not been criticism intended to improve the constitution, or efficiency, or morality of parliament, but either to make it despised and hated, or to make it a better instrument for the introduction of a system which will dispense with it.

Socialists see in a parliament an instrument which they hope to get possession of, in order to nationalise land and to collectivise property. When the instrument has served their purpose they do not mean to preserve it, but to break it, and cast it aside. They have, therefore, no desire to improve it as an instrument for directing national energies and supplying national wants. Their aim is to render it a more effective instrument of revolution during the period of transition between Capitalism and Collectivism. It is least intolerable to them when exclusively a representation of individuals, and when members are paid and as dependent as possible. They would prefer, however, direct government or delegation with an imperative mandate to representation in the ordinary sense of the term.

Socialism, in fact, has no just claim to the credit of taking an organic view of society. It is at one with Individualism in treating society as an aggregation of units. What Social Democracy proposes to do is to compress all the individual units composing a community or nation into an economic system which will secure for each unit the maximum of material enjoyment for the minimum of necessary physical labour. In this conception there is no recognition of the true nature of society, of its nature as an organic whole, with interests of a properly social, moral, and spiritual character. Such Socialism is obviously individualistic in its ideal and aims. It differs from Individualism only in its employment of social force and pressure in order to realise its ideal and reach its aims. "Economical Socialism," writes Mr. Bosanquet, "is no barrier against Moral Individualism. The resources of the State may be more and more directly devoted to the individual's well-being, while the individual is becoming less and less concerned about any well-being except his own."* Collectivism is a Socialism of this kind, and hence its influence on Democracy must necessarily be evil.

Further, Socialism must act unfavourably on Democracy in so far as it infuses into it its own excessive faith in the rights and powers of the State. The distinctive tendency of Socialism is unduly to extend the sphere and functions of the State, and to make individuals completely dependent on corporate society. For the Socialist the will of the State should be revered as authoritative in itself and accepted without question as the supreme and comprehensive law of human conduct. This reverence and obedience it does not receive, and is not entitled to receive, at present, because it is confounded with government, as contradistinguished from society; but when this opposition is done away with, and the State will become the expression or personification of organised society, of the socialised commonwealth, there can be no higher source of authority in the universe, no worthier object of worship; and then no one must be allowed to show it disrespect or to challenge its behests. "Socialists," says one of the most scientific and learned among them, "have to inculcate that spirit which would give offenders against the State short shrift and the nearest lamp-post. Every citizen must learn to say with Louis XIV., *L'Etat c'est moi.*"†

* "Essays and Addresses," p. 70.
† Karl Pearson, "Ethic of Free Thought," p. 324.

Quite so. Contemporary Socialism desires to serve itself heir to the Absolutism of past ages. Its spirit is identical with that of all despotisms. It seeks to deify itself, and means to brook no resistance to its will. The Socialist in saying *L'Etat c'est moi* will only give expression to the thought which animated the first tyrant. If Socialism can impregnate and inspire the Democracy of our time with this spirit, society in the near future will lie under the oppression of a fearful despotism.

Socialists are striving with extraordinary zeal and success to convert the adherents of Democracy to their faith. They fancy that if they can succeed in doing so they are certain to gain their ends and to establish Socialism throughout the whole of Christendom at least. It seems to me that they are too hasty in coming to this conclusion. They ought to consider not only whether or not they can socialise Democracy, but whether or not a socialist Democracy can live. The latter question is the more important of the two.

I grant that it is quite possible that Democracy may be so infatuated and misled as to adopt the principles and dogmas of Socialism. I deem it even not improbable that within a few years in several of the countries of Europe the socialistic revolution may be so far successful that for a time the powers of government will be in the hands of socialistic leaders who will make strenuous efforts to carry out the socialistic programme.

Socialism abusing the forces of Democracy may bring about a terrible revolution. Will, however, the revolution thus effected by it found the state of things that Socialism promises, and one at the same time satisfactory to Democracy? History affords us no encouragement to expect that it will. Hitherto all revolutions wrought by Democracy with a view not to the attainment of reasonable liberties but to equality of material advantages—*i.e.*, all essentially socialistic revolutions—have led only to its own injury or ruin. Greece and Rome not merely reached a democratic stage, but they passed through it into Cæsarism. May not the nations of modern Europe which have reached the same state share the same fate? Nay, must they not have the same fate unless they avoid the same faults? Is it not inevitable that any revolution which they can conceivably effect under the influence of passion for an equality inconsistent with freedom, of a perverted sense of justice, of party

fanaticism, and the desire of plunder, will speedily be found to end in the triumph of anti-democratic reaction? It has always been so; and probably always will be so. The primary necessity of society is order, security; and to obtain that it will always sacrifice anything else.

At a time when Karl Marx had hardly any followers in Britain he gave expression to the conviction that it was in Britain that his system would be first adopted. He based his conviction on what is certainly a fact, namely, that the British Constitution presents no obstacle to the adoption of any system. If Socialists so increase as to be able to elect a majority of the members of the House of Commons the whole socialistic programme may be constitutionally converted into law, and constitutionally carried into effect at the point of the bayonet. Thus far Marx saw quite clearly. And, possibly, the time may come when the people of Britain will be so infatuated as to send to Parliament a socialist majority.

But would a socialist Parliament even with a socialist majority of the people at its back be able to establish a collectivist or communist régime? Would not the minority opposed to it be superior in all the chief elements of power, except numbers, to the majority supporting it? And would not that minority have every motive to induce it to make the uttermost resistance to the order of things sought to be introduced? The immediate effect of Parliament passing into law a collectivist programme would not be the establishment of Collectivism but the origination of social and civil war, out of which there has always come, and must come, the repression of free parliamentary government, and the substitution for it of military and absolutist government.

Our English House of Commons has slowly and insensibly acquired the enormous power which it possesses because it has on the whole deserved it; because, more than any other representative assembly in the world, it has justified national confidence in its practical wisdom, its patriotism, its regard for its own honour, and its respect for the liberties and rights of the citizens. When it loses the qualities to which it owes its power, and uses that power to give effect to demagogic passions and socialistic cupidities, it will suddenly fall from the proud height to which it has slowly risen. Those who excite our English Democracy to revolution with a view to the introduction of a collectivist millennium are really working

towards the establishment not of Social Democracy but of strong Individual Government.

So many Democracies have ended in Despotisms that many have concluded that they all must do so; that there is a law of nature, an invariable law of history, which determines that Democracy must always give place to autocratic government. Most Democracies have been short-lived; some historians and theorists believe that they all will be so. "Democracies," says Froude, "are the blossoming of the aloe, the sudden squandering of the vital force which has accumulated in the long years when it was contented to be healthy and did not aspire after a vain display. The aloe is glorious for a single season. It progresses as it never progressed before. It admires its own excellence, looks back with pity on its own earlier and humbler condition, which it attributes only to the unjust restraints in which it was held. It conceives that it has discovered the true secret of being 'beautiful for ever,' and in the midst of the discovery it dies."*

I am not of opinion that Democracy *must be* short-lived, or even that it *must* die at all. All democracies not killed by violence have, so far as I can make out, died, not because they were under any necessary law of death, but because they chose the way of death when they might have chosen that of life. As so many of them, however, have in the past chosen the way of death, the way which leads through disorder to despotism, I fear that many of them will do the same in the future.

This feeling is not lessened but intensified by the obvious fact that the friends of Democracy are in general unconscious of its having now any great risks to run. The present generation, as the late M. Cournot has well pointed out, is, in comparison with that which preceded it, somewhat indifferent to liberty, and ready to endure and impose encroachments on it which promise to be advantageous. This is due partly to the diffusion among the people of socialistic principles, but partly also to the confidence that liberty can no longer be seriously endangered. This confidence is inconsiderate, and itself a serious danger. The liberty which is thought to be in no danger is almost always a liberty which is in the way of being lost. It should be remembered that Democracies not only may destroy themselves, but that when once they have entered

* "Oceana," p. 154.

on "the broad way," it is naturally less easy for them to retrace their steps, or even to moderate their pace towards destruction, than for Monarchies or Aristocracies. Just because they live much more unrestrainedly and intensely their evils come much more quickly to a head.

Words which I have elsewhere used when speaking of De Tocqueville's famous work on "Democracy in America" may here serve to complete my thought. "A part of the task which De Tocqueville attempted in that treatise was one which the human intellect can as yet accomplish with only very partial success, namely, the forecasting of the future. Induction from the facts of history is too difficult, and deduction from its tendencies too hypothetical, to allow of this being done with much certainty or precision; hence it is not to be wondered at that several of his anticipations or prophecies have not yet been confirmed, and seem now less probable than when they were first enunciated. It is more remarkable that he should have been so often and so far right; and that he should have been always so conscious that he might very possibly be mistaken. . . .

"He shared in democratic convictions, but with intelligence and in moderation. He acknowledged that Democracy at its conceivable best would be the best of all forms of government; the one to which all others ought to give place. And he was fully persuaded that all others were rapidly making way for it; and that the movement towards it, which had been so visibly going on for at least a century, could by no means be arrested. He elaborated his proof of the irresistibility and invincibility of the democratic movement, and he emphasised and reiterated the conclusion itself, because he deemed it to be of prime importance that men should be under no illusion on the matter. He succeeded at once in getting the truth generally accepted; and there has been so much confirmation of it since 1835 that probably no one will now dream of contesting it. At present Russia and Turkey are the only absolute monarchies in Europe, and it seems impossible that they should long retain their exceptional positions. There is nowhere visible on the earth in our day any power capable of resisting or crushing Democracy. If there be none such it does not follow that it will not be arrested in its progress; but it follows that it will only be arrested *by itself*.

" That it may be thus arrested De Tocqueville saw ; that it would be thus arrested he feared. While sensible of its merits he was also aware of its defects, and keenly alive to its dangers. While he recognised that it might possibly be the best of all governments he also recognised that it could easily be the worst, and that it was the most difficult either to make or to keep good. The chief aim of his work, indeed, was to demonstrate that Democracy was in imminent peril of issuing in despotism ; and that the more thoroughly the democratic spirit did its work in levelling and destroying social inequalities and distinctions, just so much the less resistance would the establishment of Despotism encounter while at the same time so much the more grievous would be its consequences.

" As regards France, his gloomiest forebodings were realised. She had shown, by the Revolution of July, 1830, that she would submit neither to autocratic nor to aristocratic government ; and in 1835 she was chafing under plutocratic rule, rapidly becoming more democratic, and getting largely imbued with the socialistic spirit which insists not only on equality of rights but on equality of conditions. The Guizot Ministry (1840-48), by blindly and obstinately refusing to grant the most manifestly just and reasonable demands for electoral reform, greatly contributed to augment the strength and violence of the democratic movement, until at length it overthrew the monarchy, and raised up a republic, one of the first acts of which was to decree universal suffrage. But in 1852 the workmen and peasants of France made use of their votes to confer absolute power on the author of a shameful and sanguinary *coup d'état*, and Cæsarism was acclaimed by 7,482,863 Ayes as against 238,582 Noes. There could be no more striking exemplification or impressive warning of the liability of Democracy to cast itself beneath the feet of Despotism.

" Yet history, so far as it has gone since De Tocqueville wrote, has not, on the whole, shown that Democracy is more than liable thus to err ; has not tended to prove that it must necessarily or will certainly thus err. For the last twenty years France has been organising herself as a democracy according to the principles of constitutional liberty. America, even while passing through a great war, gave not the slightest intimations of desire for a Cæsar. Instead of being less there is far more inequality of conditions

in the United States to-day than there was in 1835. In no other country, in fact, have such inequalities of wealth been developed during the last half-century; and inequality of wealth necessarily brings with it other kinds of inequality. In no country is the establishment of a despotism so improbable. It should be observed, however, that the only way in which we can conceive of such an event being brought about is one which would be in accordance with De Tocqueville's theory. Let the conflict between labour and capital in America proceed until the labourers attempt to employ their political power in the expropriation of the capitalists; let the Democracy of America become predominantly socialistic, in the sense of being bent on attaining the equality which requires the sacrifice of justice and of liberty; and there will happen in America what happened about two thousand years ago, in the greatest republic of the ancient world—a Cæsar will be called for and a Cæsar will appear, and Democracy will be controlled by despotism."*

* "Historical Philosophy in France and French Belgium and Switzerland," pp. 521-3.

CHAPTER X

SOCIALISM AND MORALITY

SOCIALISM has always occupied itself mainly with the economic organisation of society. It does so at the present day not less than during the earlier periods of its history. Its advocates are still chiefly engaged in urging the transference of property from individuals and corporations to the State, and in explaining how the production, distribution, and consumption of wealth may be so regulated as best to secure the advantages which they deem a socialistic system capable of conferring. At the same time Socialism has, of course, not ignored morality or the relations of morality to its own theses and proposals. No scheme of social organisation can afford to do that. Socialisation obviously cannot be effected independently of moralisation. Any proposed solution of a social problem is sufficiently refuted as soon as it is shown logically to issue in immorality. As the Duke of Argyll pithily says: "In mathematical reasoning the 'reduction to absurdity' is one of the most familiar methods of disproof. In political reasoning the 'reduction to iniquity' ought to be of equal value."*

Besides, Socialism has itself moral presuppositions and tendencies which obviously demand consideration and discussion; moral presuppositions and tendencies which its adherents must defend, and which those who reject it are certain to regard with disfavour.

Accordingly in the present chapter we shall treat of the bearing of Socialism on Morality.

Socialists charge Political Economists with having taught as science a system of doctrine which is non-moral or even immoral. They denounce Economics as it has been presented by its best accredited teachers as not only a dismal and unfruitful science, but one which has been falsified and vitiated by being severed from, and opposed to, Ethics. They profess to be alone in possession of an ethical Economics—an economic theory capable of satisfying

* "The Unseen Foundations of Society," p. 419.

the heart and conscience as well as reason and self-interest. But both the censure and the claim are based on very weak grounds.

One of these grounds is that Economics takes a narrow, unnatural, and unethical view of what ought to be its own object and scope. It is said that it confines itself to the study of wealth; subordinates man to wealth; assumes that wealth includes the satisfaction of all human desires, even while confining itself to those material things and corporeal services which minister chiefly to the appetencies and vanities of the lower nature; practically raises wealth, so understood, to the rank of an end in itself; and by exclusively dwelling on it encourages the delusion that it is the chief end of life.

The Socialists and semi-Socialists, however, who have sought by arguing thus to bring home to Economists the charge of doing injustice to morality have only made apparent the defectiveness of their insight.

In order to advance the study of any science, its cultivators must concentrate their attention on the facts and problems appropriate to it, and not allow their thoughts to roam abroad. The economist must do so equally with the mathematician and the biologist. He must fix his attention on economic processes just as the mathematician does on quantitative relations and the biologist on vital phenomena. But all economic processes are concerned with wealth, are phases or changes of wealth, in a sense so definite that it may be called its economic sense; and wealth so understood is an object sufficiently precise and distinct, as well as sufficiently extensive and interesting, to be the subject of a science. It has reasonably, therefore, been assigned to, or appropriated by, Economics as its subject.

And this being so, it is not only the business, but the entire and only legitimate business, of the economist as a pure or strict scientist to investigate the nature, conditions, laws, and consequences of the production, distribution, and consumption of wealth. To condemn him for devoting himself specially to this task, and leaving it to others to speculate on the welfare of nations or the prospects of humanity, is as foolish as it would be to censure a mathematician for prosecuting his abstract and exact deductions and calculations to the neglect of discoursing on the harmonies of the universe.

While, however, as a scientific specialist he not only may but

ought to confine himself within the limits of his special science, he should also endeavour to form as philosophical a view as possible, as comprehensive, profound, and accurate a view as possible, of the relations of that science to others, and especially to contiguous and closely connected sciences, such as psychology and ethics and their derivatives. This is the natural and appropriate preventive of the evils incident to exclusive and excessive specialisation in Economics; and economists have been gradually and increasingly realising its importance. There is no warrant for representing them as less sensible of the necessity of giving heed to the relations of Political Economy with other sciences than are socialistic theorists. They do not overlook that Economics has psychological bases, and is a science of the social order; and consequently they do not subordinate man to wealth.

To the economist wealth is not merely a material fact, but a human and social fact. It is not with wealth as a complex of external objects, but as the subject of human interests and of social processes that Political Economy is concerned. Man, in the view of the economist, is the origin and end, the ground, the medium, and the rationale of wealth; and wealth can have neither meaning nor even being apart from man, and from the rationality, the freedom, the responsibility, the capacities of feeling and of desire, and the social bonds and affinities which are distinctive of man.

In like manner Economics has been neither severed from, nor opposed to Ethics by any of its intelligent cultivators. They have merely refused crudely and confusedly to mix two distinct disciplines. Pure Economics, it is true, does not attempt more than to explain the facts and to exhibit the laws of wealth; it does not pronounce on their moral characters or discuss their moral issues; yet it deals with all moral elements or forces which are economic conditions or factors to the extent that they are so; tracing, for instance, how idleness, drunkenness, dishonesty, profligacy, and the qualities opposed to them operate in the various spheres of economic life. It is thus helpful to morality. "By demonstrating the material advantages gained through the exercise of such virtues as industry, providence, and thrift, and by showing the harm that springs from sloth, improvidence, and unthrift, political economy supplies very efficacious and practical motives for virtuous action,

motives, too, which have a hold upon those not moved by the unaided maxims of ethics pure and simple."*

Further, although the Economist cannot reasonably deem it a part of his duty as a scientific specialist to treat of the right use or abuse of wealth, or of the duties of men in connection with the acquisition and employment of wealth, he will be the first to recognise that the moralist should do so, and may confer great benefit on society by doing so. Economic Ethics is a very necessary and important branch of instruction at the present day. Obviously it is one which can only be properly taught by those who have studied Economics with sufficient care and without prejudice.

It is not scientific Economists but certain Socialists of a sentimental type who have either taught or implied that wealth is the satisfaction of all wants, or the chief end of life, or even in any instance or reference an end in itself. No genuine Economist has been so foolish as to inculcate or suggest that what he calls wealth, however abundantly produced or wisely distributed it may be, is necessarily creative either of wealth or of virtue.†

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* L. Cossa, "Introduction to Political Economy," p. 29.

† The error to which reference is made has not, perhaps, been refuted better by any subsequent economist than by Pelegrino Rossi in the second lecture of his "Cours d'Economie Politique" (1840). As the point is a not unimportant one, either in itself or in the controversy between economists and Socialists, I shall here summarise his argument: "Wealth, material prosperity, and moral development, although not unrelated, are not necessarily conjoined or uniformly connected. The poverty or wealth of a man is not a criterion of his happiness, and still less of his moral worth. As it is with individuals so is it with nations. A poor State may be prosperous and, as Sparta proves, powerful; and a wealthy State may abound in wretchedness and be on the eve of ruin. So both the wealth and general prosperity of a people may be great while its moral development is most backward. The working classes of a country may be comfortable and contented, their means of living cheap, and of enjoyment abundant, yet in that country the intellectual and moral faculties of men may be repressed and deadened, and the higher life of spiritual freedom almost extinct. Nations, then, like individuals, may be judged of as to wealth, material well-being, and moral development. To attain each of these supposes a certain use of human faculties; demands certain means, a certain action of man on the external world, and of man on man. To multiply wealth labour properly so-called is necessary, labour enlightened by physical, chemical, and mechanical knowledge, and furthered by the combination of many persons in a common work but with different functions. The wealth so produced will distribute itself among its producers according to certain laws which are the work of no one but the necessary consequence of the general facts of production. The material welfare of a nation requires another and wider application of knowledge and energy. It requires a wisely contrived social organisation and good laws, and the use of many arts and sciences for the public benefit. Moral development calls for the exercise of faculties of still another order. It appeals to our

It is among Socialists that we find those who fancy that Economics may be regenerated and ennobled by identifying—*i.e.*, confounding—wealth with weal or well-being, and so including in it not only those things to which Economists restrict the term, but the pleasures of imagination and affection, purity of heart, peace of conscience, and the satisfactions which religion confers. Obviously, there can be no common science of things so different. And as obviously thus to elevate and to extend the meaning of the term wealth can have no tendency to lead to the due subordination of what is ordinarily called wealth to morality.*

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noblest sentiments, to conscience and to reason, for it consists not in abundance of wealth and of the enjoyments of the material life, but in the culture and elevation of the spiritual nature, so as to bring out the full dignity which belongs to it. These three ends of action thus suppose the use of different means. He who merely wishes wealth, he who seeks material happiness, and he who aims at moral development, must act in different ways. The three ends may not be incompatible; but he who not content with the first desires also to secure the second, and from that to rise to the third, cannot restrain his actions within the same limits as he who looks exclusively to the first. If, therefore, political economy were merely an art—if it were a mere means towards an end, and that end were wealth—it would still have a distinct sphere of its own, and need not be confounded with politics or ethics or any other science or art. But the application of human knowledge to a definite end, the employment of individual and social forces for a practical result, is not science; and political economy may and does claim to be a science. Sciences must be classed according to their objects and not according to their uses. A science has, properly speaking, no use, no end. When we consider what use we can make of it, what end we can gain by it, we have left science and betaken ourselves to art. Science, whatever be its object, is only the possession of the truth, is only the knowledge of the relations which flow from the nature of things."

* The views on Economics propounded by Mr. Ruskin in "Unto this Last" and other writings are all supposed by him to be dependent on his definition of wealth as "the possession of the valuable by the valiant," and on the thesis that "there is *no wealth but life*, life including all the powers of love, of joy, and of admiration." Whether they are in reality logically derivable from them may well be questioned, but they are certainly quite as vague as if they were. The most definite and distinctive of them is that all labour ought to be paid by an invariable standard, good and bad workmen alike, if the latter are employed at all. "The natural and right system respecting all labour is that it should be paid at a fixed rate, but the good workman employed, and the bad workman unemployed. The false, unnatural, and destructive system is, when the bad workman is allowed to offer his work at half-price, and either take the place of the *good*, or force him by his competition to work for an inadequate sum. So far as you employ it at all, bad work should be paid no less than good work; as a bad clergyman takes his tithes, a bad physician his fee, and a bad lawyer his costs; this I say partly because the best work never was nor ever will be done for money at all, but chiefly because the moment the people know they have to pay the bad and good alike, they will try to discern the one from the other, and not use the bad. A sagacious writer in *The Scotsman* asks me if I should like any common scribbler to be paid by Smith, Elder & Co. as their good authors are. I should

It is also specially among Socialists that we find the delusion prevailing that the kingdom of heaven may be established on earth by merely reorganising the means and methods of the production and distribution of wealth; that man is the creature of circumstances, and that the moral and spiritual development of society is ultimately dependent on exclusively material conditions. Bax and Bebel, Gronlund and Stern, and indeed the whole main body of the Collectivists as well as of the Anarchists of to-day, are as much under the influence of this shallow error as was Robert Owen. They exaggerate the plasticity of human nature and assume the irresponsibility of man. They fail to perceive that the history of man has been mainly not a product of matter, but the work of man; that society has been far more the creation of individuals than individuals of society; that economic development has been at least as dependent on ethical development as the latter on it; that morality is not only so far the fruit of civilisation but also its root and vital sap; and that the great obstacle to social progress and prosperity is not the defectiveness of social arrangements or of industrial organisation but the persistency of individual human vices.

Economists as a class have not thus erred. They have seen more clearly the limits both of the power of material conditions and of the science which treats of wealth. They have recognised that there is a vast deal which wealth, however distributed or manipulated, cannot accomplish, and that the most exhaustive knowledge of its nature and laws can be only a part of the knowledge required for the solution of such a problem as how to make a nation happy or how to guide humanity towards self-perfection. Economics, strictly scientific in its methods and definitely limited in its sphere, must, they have admitted, be content merely to yield a few certain specific conclusions capable, in conjunction with those drawn from other sciences, of being applied with good effect to answer great and

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if they employed him; but would seriously recommend them, for the scribbler's sake, as well as their own, *not* to employ him."

How is it that a man of so much genius as Mr. Ruskin could regard such a method of recompensing labour as "the natural and right system" when it is so obviously unnatural and so manifestly unjust? Plainly because his standard of judgment is neither the laws of nature nor of justice but a private "ideal," a personal preconception. To count unequals as equal is unnatural. To pay for bad work as much as for good is unjust. To refuse to employ "bad," *i.e.*, inferior workmen, at all is an excessively aristocratic as well as arbitrary rule; and would not only bear hard on the "common scribbler," but reduce to beggary common workmen of all kinds.

complex questions which can never be resolved by any single science or even perhaps in any purely scientific manner.

The main argument on which Socialists rely in support of the allegation that Economics as commonly taught is in its general tendency unfavourable to morality, is that it assumes human nature to be essentially selfish, fundamentally egoistic; and that it builds itself up entirely on this assumption. They say that it lays down as premises what are only forms or applications of its primary assumption of the selfishness of human nature, and that from these premises—the principles of least sacrifice, of unlimited competition, and the like—it deduces its chief doctrines. Hence they condemn it, and demand a new Economic based either entirely or largely on sympathy and benevolence; on what they call "altruism."

In arguing thus thorough-going Socialists, such as the Social Democrats, have not stood alone, but have been encouraged and supported by so-called Academic and Christian Socialists of all shades and varieties. Mr. Thomas Davidson, favourably known by his contributions to philosophy and especially to the knowledge of the philosophy of Rosmini, has presented the argument as skilfully, perhaps, as any other writer; and, therefore, I shall quote his statement of it, indicating where I have omitted sentences which I think can be dispensed with without injustice.

"One of the avowed and cardinal assumptions of the political economy of selfishness is this, that every man tries to obtain as much of the means of satisfaction as he can, with the smallest possible amount of labour. Along with this, it makes the tacit assumption that means of satisfaction is wealth, and that the more material wealth a man has, the greater is his power of satisfying his desires. It makes also the further assumption that trouble and labour are synonymous terms, and, hence, that labour is pain, submitted to only for the sake of subsequent pleasure.

"Now, all these assumptions rest upon a more fundamental assumption, that man is simply an animal, whose sole desire is to satisfy his animal appetites. But set out with the contrary assumption, that man is a rational being, whose true satisfaction is found in spiritual activity. Spiritual activity, let me now add, consists of three things, pious intelligence, unselfish love, practical energy, guided by intelligence and love to universal ends. Upon my assumption, all the three assumptions of the economy of selfishness fall to the ground, being entirely incompatible with a moral element in man's nature. Let us consider these assumptions, beginning with the second.

"Is it in any sense true that, to a moral being, the only means of satisfaction is wealth, and that the more wealth he has, the more readily he can satisfy his desires? Is it true that all satisfactions can be obtained for material wealth? Is it true that even any of the highest satisfactions can be bought for it? Will wealth buy a pure heart, a clear conscience, a cultivated intellect, a healthy body, the power to enjoy the sublime and beautiful in nature and in art, a generous will, an ever-helpful hand—these deepest, purest satisfactions of human nature? Nay, not one of these things can be bought for all the wealth of ten thousand worlds: and not only so, but the very possession of wealth most frequently stands in the way of their attainment. . . . . What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and be a mean, contemptible, human pig, finding satisfaction only in varnished swinishness? My God! I had rather be a free wild boar, basking and fattening in the breezy woods, without a soul and without a mind, than, having a soul and a mind, to prostitute them in grovelling for wealth, and craving the satisfactions which it can give. It is not true, then, that wealth is the only means of satisfaction, or that true human satisfaction bears any ratio to wealth.

"Again, is it true that labour is necessarily trouble and pain? Let us see. I know of no sadder and more humiliating reflection upon the position of labour in our time and country, no clearer proof of the moral degradation entailed by our present economic system, than the prevalent conviction that labour is pain and trouble. We hear a great deal declaimed about the honourableness of labour, as if that were a fine, new sentiment, instead of being something which it is a disgrace ever to have doubted; but we hear hardly a word about the delights and satisfactions of labour. And the reason is, alas! that there are no delights or satisfactions in it. But is this state of things a necessity? Or is it only a temporary result of an evil system? There is not a shadow of doubt about the matter. Labour is not in itself pain and trouble, and it is only a wicked and perverse economy that now makes it so. Labour, on the contrary, under a wise economy, is to every rational being a pleasure, not something to be avoided, but something to be sought. Labour with a view to good ends is rational men's natural occupation. . . . Let labour be placed in clean, healthy, and attractive surroundings; let it never overtask the brain, nerves, or muscles; let it receive its just reward; let it leave a man with time to cultivate his mind, and to meet with his fellows in friendly ways; let it be honoured; let it be pursued with hope and the sense of progress, and, so far from being trouble and pain, it will be delight and joy.

"It is the greatest possible mistake to suppose that, under true human conditions, men try to get as much as they can with the least possible amount of trouble. This is true only under animal or inhuman

conditions. In all natural labour, men enjoy the pursuit of the result more than the result itself; for it is the pursuit alone that has a moral value. . . . . Artists often paint their best pictures for themselves, just for the delight of practising their art. The sportsman will spend whole days in hunting game which he could buy in the market for a few cents or dollars. And so it is generally. Man, as soon as he rises above the animal stage, makes no attempt to avoid labour, as a trouble and a pain; he rather seeks it as a delightful exercise of his faculties. There is nothing in the world so satisfactory as labour for a rational end.

"The baselessness of the two assumptions with regard to satisfaction and labour having been shown, the third falls to the ground of itself. Since material wealth is not the means to the highest satisfaction, and labour is not a synonym for pain and trouble, it follows at once that it is not at all true that men seek to obtain the largest amount of satisfaction with the smallest amount of labour. Thus, one of the most fundamental assumptions of the current political economy proves utterly untenable, when applied to rational beings. By attempting so to apply it, economists have been forced to bring men down to the level of the brutes. Many of them, consequently, have gone to work to prove that man, in his economic relations at least, is governed by brute laws, over which he has no control; for example, the law that every man must buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest. Assuming selfishness to be the only motive power in political economy, they have been forced to the conclusion that man is governed entirely by animal laws, and they have accepted the conclusion. A puerile enough procedure, surely!

"In a true political economy, suited to human beings, the whole of human nature, and not merely its lower, animal part, must be taken into account, and wealth must be looked upon, not as an end, but as a means to the building up and perfecting of that nature. We must no longer ask how, given human nature as purely selfish and certain other conditions, wealth will be produced and distributed; but how wealth must be produced and distributed in order to pave the way for the perfecting of human nature in the whole hierarchy of functions, headed by the moral ones."*

A few remarks should suffice to dispose of the argument thus urged.

In the first place, then, it rests entirely on a single assumption—the assumption that Political Economy assumes human nature to be essentially selfish, fundamentally egoistic. Is there any warrant for the assumption? Has any evidence been produced

* "The Moral Aspects of the Economic Question," pp. 6-11. Index Association: Boston, 1886.

in proof of the charge which it implies? None. And it is even certain that none can be produced.

Not one economist of repute has been shown to have taught the doctrine in question. The charge of having done so has been insinuated against Say, Ricardo, Malthus, Garnier, Bastiat, and even Adam Smith; but recklessly and falsely. All these authors have given distinct expression to their belief that man is distinctively and pre-eminently a rational and moral being, and that the sympathetic affections of fellow-feelings are as essential to human nature as the private appetencies or self-feelings. None of them regarded selfishness or egoism, in the popular and correct acceptation of these terms, as a normal or legitimate constituent of human nature at all. They deemed it, and very properly, an excessive and perverted development of self-feeling, a discreditable passion, a vice.

Let our Scottish economists be cited in proof. The ethical views of Francis Hutcheson, Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson, David Hume, Dugald Stewart, and Thomas Chalmers, are as well known as those which they held on economic subjects. Did they, then, represent human nature as fundamentally selfish, or even assign a small place or low rank to altruistic principles? No one who knows anything about them will answer in the affirmative. When they erred as moral philosophers it was chiefly in the contrary direction of resolving virtue into benevolence, sympathy, or the like. In a word, the argument under consideration has for its corner stone not a certified truth but an inexcusable misrepresentation.

It is a natural consequence of this initial error that the argument should proceed to affirm that Political Economy assumes that "man is simply an animal, whose sole desire is to satisfy his animal appetites." Thus to reason, however, is merely to support one calumny by another. Political Economy assumes nothing of the kind attributed to it. Political Economists have taught nothing of the kind. Political Economy has owed almost nothing to materialists, or to those who resolved all the affections and faculties of human nature into impressions of sense. It is not scientific Economics but utopian and revolutionary Socialism which has sprung from the crude materialistic sensism of the eighteenth century. And such Socialism, it must be added, has never purged itself from the evil qualities derived from its origin. They have

never been more manifest in it than they are at present. If we wish to trace back the succession of the theorists of modern Collectivism to the man with the strongest claim to be regarded as its founder, we shall have to pass from one materialist to another until we come to the author of the "Code de la Nature" (1756), the Abbé Morelly. It was on the hypothesis of materialistic egoism, the hypothesis that man is simply a physical and sentient organism, whose sole end or summum bonum is pleasure, that he rested his proposals for the suppression of private property, the collectivisation of wealth, and the common enjoyment of the products of labour; and it is on the same hypothesis that the same proposals have been generally rested ever since.

The eloquent protest of Mr. Davidson against the notion that wealth can satisfy all man's wants, or even purchase any of the highest human satisfactions, must commend itself to every mind not sordid and ignoble. But its relevancy as against Economists is more than doubtful. For Economists are just the persons who take pains so to define wealth as to make it plain that it is what satisfies only *some* wants, and these wants which, although universally important, are not among the highest. It is no principle or doctrine of Economics that wealth is an end or good in itself, or even a necessary means to such end or good. The selfishness, the avarice, which so regards it, is a passion which will find no justification in Economics, and which must have its sources elsewhere.

When a writer defines wealth as co-extensive with human weal, as Mr. Ruskin does, or declares that it can only be properly defined "in terms of man's moral nature," as Mr. Davidson does, he, in my opinion, justly lays himself open to the charge of using language calculated to favour the notion that wealth can satisfy all wants, and that material wealth shall have ascribed to it a place and dignity to which it is not entitled. Contrary to his intention he falls into the very fault of which he accuses economists notwithstanding that they had carefully avoided it.

Social Democrats and other advocates of Collectivism have, of course, not erred in the same way as those who, like Mr. Ruskin and Mr. Davidson, have approached Socialism from the side of idealism; but it is they, and not economists, who specially deserve censure for ascribing an excessive importance to wealth. It is

Collectivism which proposes to convert entire society into a vast association for the production of wealth, and to exempt no class of persons, male or female, from the compulsion of giving several hours daily to industrial labour. There is, in fact, no characteristic of Collectivism more conspicuous than the predominance which it assigns to the economic interests of society over all others; than what Cathrein calls its "einseitige Betonung des wirthschaftlichen Lebens." It assumes that if a satisfactory economic organisation is attained all other needed organisation will follow and perfect itself as a matter of course. "Seek first equality of wealth and the happiness which that can give you," and all other blessings will be added to you, is its first and great commandment as well as its chief and special promise.

Economists will admit as readily as other people that labour is very often a great deal more disagreeable and painful than it need be or ought to be. But, certainly, they will also demand more proof than any man's mere word for regarding labour as in no degree pain and trouble, but delight and joy. Labour is not play. Not only a wicked and perverse economy but also the nature of things and the nature of man render necessary hard, prolonged, wearisome labour. If labour involved no pain or trouble, no self-denial or self-sacrifice, it would be no moral discipline and would deserve neither honour nor reward.

That "men seek to obtain the largest amount of satisfaction with the smallest amount of labour" is a principle which Economists will not refuse to accept the responsibility of maintaining. But, says Mr. Davidson, "it proves utterly untenable when applied to rational beings." Indeed! Has he ever met with a single rational being to whose conduct it would not apply in strictly economic relationships? What rational being will not prefer, other things being equal, little labour to much, large wages to small? If, indeed, so far from other things being equal, the little labour and the large wages require the violation of the moral laws of purity, of justice, or of charity, then every good man will prefer to them much labour and small pay; but then, also, by doing so he will not in the least violate the principle laid down by Economists. The economic principle is no longer alone, and consequently is no longer to be alone considered. Besides, the largest possible amount of pay for the least possible amount of labour will in such

circumstances bring with it no "satisfaction" to any properly "rational being." What will it profit a man although he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?

The allegation that economists by accepting the principle in question "have been forced to bring men down to the level of the brutes" has only this modicum of truth in it, that brutes would all perish if they were such incarnate absurdities as to prefer wasting their energies and advantages to profiting by them. It might, however, be as relevantly said that acceptance of the principle brings men down even to the level of inanimate agents, inasmuch as winds and waters and other elements and powers of nature always follow the path of least resistance. It is surely no degradation to reason to accept and apply of its own free choice a principle which is both rational and natural.

Economists do not say that "every man must buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest;" or that any man must. They never say "Thou must, or Thou shalt." They lay down no precepts. They are content to indicate what economic results will, under given conditions, follow from any given course of economic action. Any man can buy and sell at an economic disadvantage if he pleases. Most men occasionally do so, and from a variety of motives. And why should they not? There are occasions when no one is under obligation to act on economic principle, or from an economic motive. All that Economists maintain as to the principle which so offends Mr. Davidson, and, it may be added, Mr. Ruskin, is that it is true in the sphere of Economics: that if a man does not buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest he will not buy and sell to full economic advantage; and will not grow rich, or at least as rich as he otherwise would. Its truth has been denied only by those who have failed to understand its meaning.

Economics, then, does not assume the essential or exclusive selfishness of human nature. It assumes merely that when any man buys or sells labour or commodities his actions have a motive satisfactory to himself; have in view some good or advantage which he deems will be a sufficient recompense for his toil and trouble. It assumes self-interest in this sense and to this extent.

But self-interest thus understood is not selfishness any more than it is benevolence. It does not even necessarily imply self-love

any more than benevolence. The (self) interest in labour or trade may spring, indeed, exclusively from a desire to gratify my own appetites, but it may also spring from a desire to promote the welfare of my relatives, my fellow-citizens, my fellow-men. My interest in carrying on business may arise mainly or even wholly from my desire to make wealth in order to give it away for beneficent and noble ends. Economics does not take account of the characters and varieties of the motives which underlie the self-interest which it assumes; but neither does it pronounce these motives to be of one kind or character. It stops short at the self-interest, and leaves to psychology and ethics the consideration of the ulterior motives, the mental and moral states, in which the self-interest originates.

That most of the actions which are concerned in the production and distribution of wealth have their ultimate source in self-love, and very many of them in selfishness, is not, indeed, to be denied. It is a fact, although one for which neither Economics nor Economists are responsible. Men do not directly produce wealth for others, but for themselves, even when they forthwith transfer it to others. They must in the first place get it to themselves. It is only when they have got it that they can give it away. Traders who profess to sell their goods at tremendous sacrifices are necessarily humbugs. Theorists who profess to found Economics on altruism unconsciously occupy in science a corresponding place to that which such traders occupy in practice.

Strictly speaking, Economics does not assume either egoism or altruism, but only self-interest in a sense in which it may be either egoistic or altruistic. Even, however, if it did distinctly assume self-love to be the motive force of economic life it could not in fairness simply on that ground be condemned as immoral or debasing in its teaching. Self-love is not selfishness; not egoism understood, as it generally is understood, as equivalent to selfishness. It is a rational regard to one's own good on the whole. It involves a general notion of happiness or well being, and not mere love of pleasure or aversion to pain. It presupposes experience of the satisfactions obtained through our particular affections, groups and co-ordinates, as it were, these satisfactions, and seeks to obtain them in such a regulated way as to secure true and permanent happiness. It is essentially based on reflection, necessarily calm

and deliberative; and is rather a habit of the whole mind or cast of character than a single principle, however composite.

Such being the nature of self-love, we may easily see what acting from it is not, which is what here specially concerns us.

For example, the man who acts from self-love thus understood must be one who does not seek too keenly, or estimate too highly, the pleasures yielded by any particular appetite or passion. To yield in excess to the cravings or affections of nature, to yield at all to feelings which are in themselves unnatural or excessive, is to act not from but against self-love. It is to sacrifice the whole to the part, permanent and rational happiness to temporary and unworthy gratification.

Again, self-love is not selfishness, and acting from the one principle is quite different in character from acting from the other. Self-love aims at the completest and highest good of self. Selfishness aims at seizing and keeping for oneself, at alone possessing and enjoying, what it considers good; and being thus excessive desire of exclusive possession, it disregards the highest and most satisfying goods, those which cannot be exclusively attained or possessed—truth and beauty, moral and spiritual goodness. It concentrates itself on material advantages, clings exclusively to wealth, and finds its fullest exemplification in the miser, whom it engrosses and degrades until he becomes almost as insensible to self-respect, to the voice of conscience, to generous feelings, or to religious influences, as, in the words of Salvian, " is the gold which he worships."

Further, self-love is not opposed, as selfishness is, to benevolence. There may be an occasional contrariety, to use Butler's phrase, between self-love and benevolence as there may be between self-love and other affections; but both in themselves and in the courses of conduct to which they lead self-love and benevolence are in essential harmony. Love wholly engrossed with self is not rational self-love. It is irrational not only in its exclusiveness and injustice even, but also in its futility and self-contradictoriness, for it necessarily defeats its own end, the happiness of self. The benevolent affections are among the richest sources of personal happiness. The man who loves himself only loves himself very unwisely, for he so loves himself that he can never be happy. On the other hand, no man who does not care for his own true good

will care for the true good of others. Ruining one's self is not the way to be most helpful to others.*

Self-love, it must be added, is desire not of illusory and fleeting advantage to self, but of the real and lasting good of self. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The love of thyself is as legitimate as the love of thy neighbour. Only, however, when it is of the same kind. The second commandment is "like unto" the first and great commandment in that it enjoins only pure, true love. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind." To Him who is Absolute Truth, Perfect Goodness, Infinite Holy Love, thou shalt give an unrestrained, unlimited, unswerving, true, pure, and holy love. And thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But how, then, mayest thou love either thy neighbour or thyself? Only with a love which is true love; which seeks thy own true good and his; which aims always at what will ennoble, never at what will debase thee or him; which prefers both for thyself and for thy neighbour the pain and the poverty which discipline and purify the spirit to the pleasure and prosperity that seduce and corrupt it; which does not forget at any time to ask both as regards thyself and thy neighbour, What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? and which, in a word, in no way withdraws thee from, or diminishes in thee, the love thou owest to God, but is itself a form and manifestation of that love. From God all true love comes, and in Him all true love lives. True love of self is as essentially in harmony with love to God as with love to man.†

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* "Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;
The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds;
Another still, and still another spreads.
Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace,
His country next, and next all human race.
Wide and more wide the o'erflowings of the mind
Take every creature in of every kind."

These well-known lines of Pope are only true of *true* self-love—*i.e.*, the self-love which, like the various forms of benevolence itself, implies and is akin to "the virtuous mind."

† For confirmation of the positions laid down in the preceding three pages the reader is referred to Bishop Butler's two sermons "Upon the Love of our Neighbour" (xi.-xii.). A vast amount of worthless writing on egoism and altruism has appeared in recent years implying on the part of its authors lamentable ignorance of the teachings of these invaluable discourses.

Socialists, we have now seen, have failed to prove that Economics is antagonistic to morality. How, we proceed to inquire, is their own doctrine related to morality?

Morality is essentially one, inasmuch as it springs from an internal principle of reverence for rectitude, of love of ethical excellence, which should pervade all the activities and manifestations of the moral life. Where any branch of duty or virtue is habitually disregarded, there the root of morality must be essentially unsound. No moral excellence can be complete where the entire moral character is not simultaneously and harmoniously cultivated. Yet there are many virtues and many duties; and these may be arranged and classified in various ways, of which the simplest certainly, and the best not improbably, is into Personal, Social, and Religious.*

Man occupies in the world three distinct yet connected moral positions. Hence arise three distinct yet connected species of moral relationship. Man is a rational and responsible agent, cognisant of duty towards himself, of obligations to restrain and control, improve and cultivate, realise and perfect *himself*. As such the moral law has a wide sphere for authority in his conduct as an individual; as such he is the subject of personal virtues and vices. He is also a social being, bound to his fellow creatures by many ties, and capable of influencing them for good or ill in many ways. As such he has social duties, and can display social virtues. He is, further, a creature of God, manifoldly related to the Author of Life, the Father of Spirits, the Supreme Lawgiver. And as such he has religious duties and ought to cultivate the graces of a pious and devout mind.

But already at this point true ethics and the ordinary ethics of Socialism come into direct and most serious conflict. The vast majority of contemporary Socialists recognise only the obligatoriness of social morality. They refuse to acknowledge the ethical claims of either the personal or the religious virtues. The former, in so far as they take notice of them at all, they judge of only from the point of view of social convenience; the latter they treat as phases of either superstition or hypocrisy. They thus set themselves in opposition to two-thirds of the moral law. The triumph

* No opinion is here expressed as to how either the ethical or the science which treats of it may be most appropriately distributed.

of their doctrine would thus involve a tremendous moral as well as social revolution.

It would be most unfair to charge all Socialists with discarding religious morality. There are Socialists, real Socialists, men prepared to accept the whole economic and social programme of Social Democracy, who retain their belief in God and acknowledge the obligations of religion. There are among thorough-going Socialists some Anglican High-Churchmen, and a still greater number of zealous members of the Roman Catholic Church. Of course, all these have a religious morality—theistic, Christian, or churchly and confessional, as the case may be. But such Socialists are comparatively few, compose no homogeneous body, and possess little influence. It is enough to note that they exist.

Contemporary Socialism viewed as a whole unquestionably rests on a non-religious conception of the universe, and is plainly inconsistent with any recognition of religious duty in the ordinary acceptation of the term. As a rule, when the Socialist speaks of his religion, he means exactly the same thing as his polity; and should he by chance talk of religious duty, he understands thereby simply social duty.

The truth on this point is thus expressed by a good socialistic authority: "The modern socialistic theory of morality is based upon the agnostic treatment of the supersensuous. Man, in judging of conduct, is concerned only with the present life; he has to make it as full and as joyous as he is able, and to do this consciously and scientifically with all the knowledge of the present, and all the experience of the past, pressed into his service. Not from fear of hell, not from hope of heaven, from no love of a tortured man-god, but solely for the sake of the society of which I am a member and the welfare of which is my welfare—for the sake of my fellow-men—I act morally, that is, socially. . . . . Socialism arises from the recognition (1) that the sole aim of mankind is happiness in this life, and (2) that the course of evolution, and the struggle of group against group, has produced a strong social instinct in mankind, so that, directly and indirectly, the pleasure of the individual lies in forwarding the prosperity of the society of which he is a member. Corporate society—the State, not the personified Humanity of Positivism—becomes the centre of the Socialist's faith. The polity of the Socialist is thus his morality, and his reasoned morality

may, in the old sense of the word, be termed his religion. It is this identity which places Socialism on a different footing to the other political and social movements of to-day."*

This elimination of religious duty from the ethical world seems to me a fatal defect in the socialistic theory. I am content, however, to leave it uncriticised. It could not be left altogether unindicated.

Socialism also sacrifices personal to social morality. It ascribes to the conduct and habits of individuals no moral character in themselves, but only so far as they affect the happiness of society. It sees in the personal virtues no intrinsic value, but only such value as they may have when they happen to be advantageous to the community. Utilitarianism tended to induce this sort of moral blindness, and some of its advocates went far in the direction of thus doing injustice to the personal virtues. But Socialism errs in the same way uniformly and more strenuously, *peccat fortiter*. And it is not difficult to see why.

Socialism naturally bases its moral doctrine on utilitarianism, on altruistic hedonism: naturally assumes that the sole aim of mankind is happiness in this life, the happiness of society; and that virtue is what furthers and vice what hinders this aim. It tends, therefore, as all altruistic hedonism does to identify "right" and "wrong" with *social* and *anti-social*; to conclude that there would be no morality at all if men did not require the sympathy and help of their fellow-men; and so to merge private in public ethics.

Further, Socialism is carried towards the same result by holding that morality is merely a product of social development, or, as Marx said of Capital, "an historical category." It represents economic factors as the roots of human culture, and morals as only a portion of its fruits; the material conditions of society as the causes which determine social growth, and the civilisation which has thence resulted as the source of all the ethical perceptions, feelings, and actions now in the world. It still, as in the days of Owen and Saint-Simon, traces character to circumstances; believes in the almost boundless power of education; depreciates the reality, persistency, and efficacy of the operation of moral forces in the life and history of mankind; and looks at spiritual processes through the obscuring and falsifying medium of a

* Karl Pearson, "The Ethic of Free Thought," pp. 318-9.

superficial empiricism. Hence it overlooks fundamental ethical factors; fails to recognise that history is just as much a moral creation as morality is an historical production; and does not see that were there no specifically personal virtue there would be no genuinely social virtue.

The chief reason of the socialist view has yet to be given. Socialism of its very nature so absorbs the individual in society as to sacrifice his rights to its authority. This is its differential feature. Where the individual is fully recognised to be an end in himself, a true moral agent entitled and bound to strive after his own highest self-realisation, independently of any authority but that of Him of whose nature and will the moral law is the expression, there can be no real Socialism. In Social Democracy we have a somewhat highly developed form of Socialism, although one which finds it convenient to be either silent or ambiguous on essential points where the necessity of choosing between slavery and freedom so presents itself that it cannot safely pronounce for the former and cannot consistently pronounce for the latter. It demands that society should be so organised that every man will have his assigned place and allotted work, the duration of his labour fixed and his share of the collective produce determined. It denies to the individual any rights independent of society; and assigns to society authority to do whatever it deems for its own good with the persons, faculties, and possessions of individuals. It undertakes to relieve individuals of what are manifestly their own moral responsibilities, and proposes to deprive them of the means of fulfilling them. It would place the masses of mankind completely at the mercy of a comparatively small and highly centralised body of organisers and administrators entrusted with such powers as no human hands can safely or righteously wield.

Such a doctrine as this is even more monstrous when looked at from a moral than from an economic or a political point of view. It is above all the moral personality which it outrages and would destroy. It makes man—

> "An offering, or a sacrifice, a tool
> Or implement, a passive thing employed
> As a brute mean;"

and nothing

> "Can follow for a rational soul
> Perverted thus, but weakness in all good,
> And strength in evil."

On this point the following words of a very acute and thoughtful writer will convey my conviction better than any which I could frame of my own. "A State Collectivism in which the unqualified conception of an 'organism' logically lands us, by restraining the free activity of each self-conscious personality, strikes not only at the liberty of the citizen in the vulgar acceptance of the term 'liberty,' but cuts off at the fountain-head the spring of the entire spiritual life of man. It is profoundly immoral; for with free activity must perish all that distinguishes man from animal, and all must go in religion, philosophy, literature, and art by which human life has been exalted and dignified. If these things still held a place in the life of the race it would be as a dim tradition of happier epochs. It has not been the race as a collective body which has created literature, and art, and religion—no, not even political institutions and laws—but great personalities, in presence of whose genius the mass bowed the head in submission or acquiescence. An organised and consistent Collectivism would, like an absolute paternal despotism, be the grave of distinctive humanity."*

Men would wholly belie their manhood if they submitted to such a system. It is one which can only be accepted by a senseless and servile herd of beings unworthy of the name of men. Only a slavish heart will yield to society the obedience which is claimed. Only a man without either living faith in God or a real sense of duty will so set society in God's place or so conform to whatever it may decree as Collectivism expects. Society is mortal; men are immortal. Society exists for the sake of men; men do not exist for the sake of society. Men are primarily under obligation to God; only secondarily to society. The laws of society are laws only in so far as they are in accordance with right reason. When they are contrary to divine and eternal law they can bind no one. An unjust law, as Thomas Aquinas has said, is not law at all, but only a species of violence.

When acting within its proper sphere, society, organised as the State or Nation, may, in certain circumstances and for good reason shown, exact from its members the greatest sacrifices. If invaded by a foreign enemy it may without scruple send every man who is capable of bearing arms to the battle-field or draw to exhaustion on the resources of its richest citizens in order to enable it to repel

* S. S. Laurie, "Ethica," p. 227.

the common foe. But it has no right to dictate to any of its members what they shall do for a living, so long as they can make an honest living for themselves; and if it so dictates it has no right to expect from them obedience, and should receive none. If society enacts that certain individuals shall labour either unreasonably many or unreasonably few hours a day, those with whose freedom it thus interferes will act a patriotic part if they set its decree at defiance and brave the consequences of so doing. If it attempts to take from them arbitrarily and without compensation property justly earned or legitimately acquired, they will do well to resist to the utmost such socialistic tyranny and spoliation, whatever are the penalties thereby incurred. It is only by acting in this spirit that the rights of individuals have been won; it is only by readiness to act in it that they will be retained. It is only when this spirit of personal independence based on personal responsibility, of the direct relationship of the individual as a moral being to the moral law and its author, has become extinct that a logically developed Socialism can be established; and where it is extinct all true morality will be so likewise.

The reason why Socialism thus comes so grievously into conflict with morality is none other than its root-idea, its generative error —a false conception of the relation of individuals to society.

A true conception of the relation must be neither individualistic nor socialistic.

It must not be individualistic. Society is not merely the creation of individuals, or a means to their self-development; it is further so far the very condition of their being, and the medium in which they live materially, intellectually, and morally. While the individual has natural rights independent of society and as against society, these are not rights which imply " a state of nature " anterior to society, but rights grounded in the constitution of human nature itself. There are no personal duties wholly without social references. The mere individual, the individual entirely abstracted from society, is a pure abstraction, a nonentity. The individualistic view of the relation of man to society is, therefore, thoroughly false.

Not more so, however, than the socialistic view. It in no way follows that because the individual man exists in and by society he is related to it only as chemical elements are related to the

compounds which they build up, or as cells to organisms, or as the members of an animal body to the whole. Man is not so related to society, for the simple reason that he is a *person*, a free and moral being, or, in other words, a being whose law and end are in himself, and who can never be treated as a mere means either for the accomplishment of the will of a higher being nor for the advantage of society without the perpetration of moral wrong, without desecrating the most sacred of all things on earth, the personality of the human soul. With reference to the ultimate end of life man is not made for society but society for man. Hence the sacrifice of the individual to society which Socialism would make is not a legitimate sacrifice but a presumptuous sacrilege.*

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* "The term 'organism,' useful as it is, is not applicable to the State at all save in a metaphorical way. An organism is a complex of atoms such that each atom has a life of its own, but a life so controlled as to be wholly subject to the 'idea' of the complex, which complex is the total 'thing' before us. Each part contributes to the whole, and the idea of the whole subsumes the parts into itself with a view to a specific result, and can omit no part. As regards such an organism we can say that no part has any significance except in so far as it contributes to the resultant whole, which is the specific complex *individuum*. It is at once apparent that this furnishes an analogy which aids and may determine our conception of an harmonious State, just as it does of an harmonious man. But it is at best an analogy merely. . . . .

"Unlike the atoms of a true organism, it has to be pointed out that the atoms of society are individual, free, self-conscious Egos, which seek each *its own* completion—*its own* completion, I repeat, through and by means of the whole . . . . These free atoms have a certain constitution and certain potencies which bring them into a specific relationship to their environment, including in that environment other free atoms. It is that independent constitution and these potencies which, seeking their own fulfilment as vital parts of the organic spiritual whole which we call a man, find the whole world, including other persons, to be only an occasion and opportunity of self-fulfilment; and on these it has to seize if it would be itself. Brought by the necessity of its own nature into communities of like Egos, each gradually finds the conditions whereby its life as an individual can be best fulfilled. It is the law of *their* inner activity as beings of reason, of desire, and of emotion, which gradually becomes the external law which we call political constitutions, positive statute, and social usage. Thus generalised and externalised, the 'relations of persons' become an entity of thought, but this abstract entity exists only in so far as it exists in each person. To this generalisation of ends and relations we may fitly enough apply the word and notion 'organism', for the metaphorical expression here, as in many other fields of intellectual activity, helps us to realise the whole. But we have to beware of the tyranny of phrases. . . . . The Ego does not exist for what is called the 'objective will,' but the reverse. So far from the 'atom,' the self-conscious Ego, having significance only in so far as it contributes to the organism, the so-called organism has ultimate significance only in so far as it exists for the free Ego. The 'organic' conception, if accepted in an unqualified sense, would reduce all individuals to slavery, and all personal ethics to slavish obedience to existing law."—S. S. Laurie, "Ethica," pp. 209-12.

Now all this bears directly on the pretensions of Socialism to be *a solution of the social question.* It proves that these pretensions are largely mere pretensions—false pretensions. The social question is mainly a moral question; and the key to every moral question is only to be found in the state of heart of individuals, in goodness or badness of will. The kingdom of heaven on earth does not begin in the world without, but works outwards from the heart within. It can be based on no other foundation than the moral renovation of individuals—the *metanoia* of John the Baptist and the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount. The great bulk of human misery is due not to social arrangements but to personal vices. It is unjust to lay the blame of the sufferings caused by indolence, improvidence, drunkenness, licentiousness, and the like, chiefly on the faulty arrangements of society, instead of on the evil dispositions of those who exemplify these qualities or habits. Society may not be indirectly or wholly guiltless in the matter; but those who are directly and mainly guilty are, in general, the individuals who involve themselves and others in misery through shirking duty and yielding to base seductions. The socialistic teaching which studiously refrains from offending the lazy loafer, "the wicked and slothful servant," the drunkard whose self-indulgence is the sole cause of his poverty, the coarse sensualist who brings on himself disease and destitution, and the like; and which even encourages them to regard themselves not as sinners but as sinned against, the badly used victims of a badly constituted society: this teaching, I say, is the most erroneous, the least honest or faithful, and the least likely to be effective and beneficial that can be conceived.*

* The corresponding individualistic error would be that social environment has no influence or but slight influence on individual character. As we reject Individualism equally with Socialism, we have naturally no sympathy with this error. It is obviously inconsistent with facts. The characters of men are to a large extent affected by their material and moral surroundings. As the physical medium may be such as to poison and destroy, instead of strengthening and developing the physical life, so may it be as regards the moral medium and the moral life. Endeavours after the personal improvement of those who are placed in circumstances unfavourable thereto should be accompanied by attempts at modifying the circumstances. To hope to do much good to those who are condemned to live amidst physically and morally foul conditions by so individualistic a method as merely distributing religious tracts among them is foolish. To refuse to aid in modifying these conditions for the better on the plea that those so situated ought "to reform themselves" must be merely pharisaical pretence.

Prof. Marshall ("Principles of Economics," vol. i. p. 64) perhaps credits

Let us pass on to the consideration of the relationship of Socialism to Social Morality. Here I shall say nothing of the moral life of the family, domestic ethics, although Socialism is notoriously very vulnerable at this point. I have touched on it, however, in chapter viii., and I refrain from returning to it.

Socialism is morally strongest in its recognition of the great principle of human brotherhood. In all its forms it professes belief in the truth of the idea of fraternity. It proclaims that men are brethren, and bound to act as such; that they are so members one of another that each should seek not only his own good but the good of others, and, so far as it is within his power to further it, the good of all. It vigorously condemns two of the greatest plagues which have scourged humanity, war and the oppression of the poor and feeble; and it glorifies two of the things which most honour and advantage humanity, labour and sympathy with those who are in poor circumstances and humble situations. Its spirit is directly and strongly opposed to that which ruled when war was deemed the chief business of human life, and when the laws of nations were made by and on behalf of a privileged few; it is a spirit which recognises that the work which man has to do on earth ought to be accomplished chiefly through brotherly co-operation, and that society cannot too earnestly occupy itself with the task of ameliorating the condition of the class the most numerous and indigent.

There we have what is noblest and best in Socialism; what has made it attractive to many men of good and generous natures. Thus far it is the embodiment and exponent of truth, justice, and charity; great in conception, admirable in character, and beneficent in tendency. Were Socialism only this, and wholly this, its spirit would be identical with that of true morality, as well as of pure religion, and every human being ought to be a Socialist.

But Socialism is much else besides this, and often very different

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Socialists somewhat too generously with having shown the importance in economic investigations of an adequate recognition of *the pliability of human nature*. Should this merit not rather be ascribed to the Economists of the Historical School? Is the contribution of Karl Marx, for example, to the proof or the relativity of economic ideas and systems not very slight indeed in comparison with that of Wilhelm Roscher? Nay, has the former in this connection done much more than exaggerate, and distort and discolour with materialism—*i.e.*, metaphysics—the historic and scientific truth set forth by the latter?

from this. It often directly contradicts the principle, and grievously contravenes the spirit, of brotherhood; often appeals to motives and passions, and excites to conduct and actions the most unbrotherly. As yet it has done little directly, little of its own proper self, to propagate the spirit of brotherhood, and to spread peace or good will or happiness among men. As yet it has led chiefly to hatred and strife, violence and bloodshed, waste and misery, and only occasioned good by convincing those who are opposed to it of the necessity of seeking true remedies for the evils which it exhibits but also intensifies. The leaders of Socialism have largely acquired their power by appealing not to the reasons and consciences, but to the envy, the cupidity, and the class prejudices of those whom they have sought to gain to their views. The power which they have thus obtained has undoubtedly been formidable; but the responsibility which they have incurred has also been terrible.

Let us not be misunderstood. We blame no man for stirring up the poor to seek by all reasonable and lawful means the betterment of their condition; nor for agitating in any honourable way to make the community or the Government realise the duty and urgency of solicitude for the wellbeing of the labouring population; nor for exposing whatever seems to him oppression or injustice on the part of capitalists; nor for taking an active part in resisting the selfish demands of employers, or in supporting the just claims of workmen, so long as in his ways of doing so he does not contravene any principle of morality. We fully admit that by all such actions the spirit of brotherhood is not violated but exemplified, even when the action may give much offence to those who are in the wrong, and to those who sympathise with them. But we are morally bound to condemn those who strive to create discontent and division among men, and to foster and excite the spirit of social disorder, by flattering certain classes and calumniating others, or by appealing to envy and covetousness. And, unfortunately, it is impossible to exonerate Socialists from the charge of having done this to a deplorable extent. In every country where Socialism is prevalent, abundant proof of the charge is to be found in the speeches of its acknowledged leaders, in the articles of its party periodicals and in the actions of its adherents.

That Socialism should have thus been so unfaithful to its

profession of belief in fraternity has been the necessary consequence of its aiming mainly to secure class advantages, to further party interests. It has persistently represented the solution of the social question as only to be obtained through a triumph of what it calls *the fourth estate*, similar to that which *the third estate* gained in France by the revolution which at the close of the eighteenth century abolished the absolute control of an individual will, and swept away the unjust privileges of the nobles and clergy. By this victory the Third Estate is represented as having gained for itself political supremacy, wealth, and comfort. But, we are told that, while it has been prospering, another estate has been rapidly growing up under its régime, and rapidly increasing in numbers and in wretchedness; and that this Fourth Estate is now rapidly rising all over the world against the rule of the third estate, as that estate rose in France against monarchical despotism and the domination of the two higher estates; that it is demanding its full share of enjoyment, wealth, and power; and that it is resolved so to reorganise the constitution and administration of society as to give effect to its will.*

This description of the social situation is very inaccurate and misleading. There is no Fourth Estate at present in any of the more advanced nations of the world in the sense in which there was a Third Estate in France before the Revolution. The victory of the Third Estate, in France as everywhere else, was a victory over privilege, not the transference of privilege to itself. The rights which it gained were "the rights of man," and were gained for all men. Its victory destroyed "estates" in the old sense, and removed the foundations on which any such new estate can be raised.

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* In a paper entitled "La Prétendue Antinomie de Bourgeoisie et de Peuple dans nos Institutions Politiques" (published in the "Compte Rendu des Séances et Travaux de l'Acad. d. Sciences Morales et Politiques," Août, 1893), M. Doniol has made an interesting contribution to the history of the imaginary distinction between *bourgeoisie* and *peuple*. It originated in the use of the designation *la bourgeoisie de* 1830 as a party nickname. Jean Reynaud (in the art. "Bourgeoisie" in the "Encyclopédie Nouvelle," 1837) employed the term *bourgeoisie* to denote those whom Saint-Simon had termed "free" in the sense of being "above want." The notion that the terms *bourgeoisie* and *peuple* denote a real antinomy of "classes" or "estates" was raised into a theory and popularised by Louis Blanc's "Histoire de Dix Ans" and "Histoire de la Révolution Française" (tom. i.). The only semblance of foundation for it was the existence of a property qualification for voting.

The putting forward of the claims of a Fourth Estate in the socialistic fashion necessarily implies a proposal to undo the work which the Third Estate accomplished, to reintroduce protection and privilege, to withdraw the common rights of men in order to equalise conditions by favouring some at the expense of others, and, in a word, to suppress natural liberty and to violate justice. Were Socialists, however, to do otherwise they would virtually admit that the economic and other evils under which society is suffering are of a kind to be dealt with not by such revolutions as may be necessary to gain essential rights and natural liberties, but by such reforms—*i.e.*, such measures of adjustment and improvement—as will always be needed to ensure the proper exercise of rights, and to prevent the abuses of liberties, which have been gained.

Accordingly they persist in presenting an exaggerated and distorted view of the social situation. And in order to give plausibility to it they denounce as akin to those social and civil distinctions, against which the France of the Revolution so justly protested, others which are of an entirely different character. But they are thereby inevitably led to deny the principle and to contravene the spirit of fraternity. Whenever, for example, they represent the distinction between rich and poor as equivalent in itself to one between the privileged and the oppressed, they set the poor against the rich by teaching error. There is nothing unjust in men having very unequal shares of wealth. To prevent the freedom of choice and conduct, the exercise of which leads some to wealth and others to poverty, would be manifestly unjust so long as that freedom was not immorally and dishonestly applied. To equalise fortunes by the employment of force and the suppression of liberties would be manifestly to oppress those levelled down and unfairly to favour those levelled up.

Besides, when liberty is only limited by justice there is no absolute division or distinction between rich and poor: they do not form separate castes or even distinct "estates." There is, in this case, a continuous gradation from the richest of the rich to the poorest of the poor, and there is no inequality of rights, such as there was between the nobility and the clergy of France and the great bulk of the French people before the Revolution.

Socialists must likewise bear the responsibility of having seriously

violated the principle of fraternity by habitually representing capitalists, both good and bad, as the enemies and the oppressors of the working classes. They have thus spread hatred and enmity among those who ought to live on terms of friendly and fraternal relationship. And they have similarly erred by indulging in much mischievous abuse of the shop-keeping and trading community, or *bourgeoisie* as they call it. They have represented it as a non-productive and parasitic body composed of peculiarly narrow-minded, prejudiced, and selfish persons, and manual labourers as mentally and morally superior to them, and the only true authors of national wealth. At the same time, further to deceive and to embitter those whom they have thus flattered, they are accustomed to describe them as the *proletariat—i.e.*, to apply to them a term of insult and shame, one only applicable to the idle, servile, improvident, and dissolute, and wholly inappropriate to men who honestly labour for their bread. While, then, Socialists have placed the word " fraternity " conspicuously in their programmes and on their banners, they have, in general, deplorably disregarded and dishonoured it in their speeches, writings, and actions. I rejoice to acknowledge that there are exceptions, signal and noble exceptions, to this statement; but as a general statement it cannot be disputed.

The thought of fraternity readily suggests that of charity, for brethren ought to love and to aid one another. A man who really feels the brotherhood of men cannot but recognise in every sufferer the appropriate object of his sympathy, nor can he fail to do his part in supplying the wants of the needy. How, then, is Socialism related to charity, understanding the term in its ordinary signification ? Socialism aims at suppressing the need of charity, at least so far as poverty constitutes the need. It professes to be a complete solution of the problem of misery. It undertakes to secure that there shall be no poor, but that all men shall be equally rich, or at least sufficiently rich. What are we to think of it in this respect ?

It would not be fair to charge it with want of charity. If it errs as to charity it is owing to its feeling of charity. And it is commendable in aiming at reducing the need for charity. If poverty could be abolished by us we undoubtedly ought to abolish it. It is a duty to strive to get rid of it as far as possible without causing

evils even worse than itself. Socialistic teaching as to charity is healthily counteractive of much churchly teaching on the subject which has done enormous mischief.

In Palestine at the time of Christ, and generally throughout the Roman Empire in the early centuries of Christianity, charity in the form of almsgiving, or at least of relief which involved no demand for labour or exertion from the recipient, was not only an appropriate, but almost the only way of relieving poverty. In inculcating brotherly love, Christ naturally enjoined His hearers to show it in what was the only form in which they could show it. But unfortunately his exhortations to almsgiving have been so widely misunderstood and misapplied as to have increased enormously the power and wealth of the Church and the number and the degradation of the poor. In several countries of Europe so-called charity has, perhaps, done more harm than even war. To provide remunerative work, and so to make almsgiving as unnecessary as possible, is what is most required at the present day. A man who established a successful manufactory in the west of Ireland would thereby do much more good there than by giving away a large fortune in alms.

But it is one thing to be aware of the abuses of charity and another to deny such need for it as really exists, or to fancy, as Socialists do, that the need for it is temporary and may be easily got rid of. I fear that vast as are the sums at present spent in charity, they are not vaster than are required; and that comparatively few people who give with discrimination and after due inquiry give too much in charity. I confess even to not seeing any probability that our earth will become free from sorrow and suffering, pain and poverty, so long as the physical constitution and arrangements of the world remain generally what they are, and especially so long as human nature and its passions are not essentially changed.

Will the adoption of Communism or Collectivism prevent earthquakes and tempests, pestilence and disease, drought and famine, catastrophes and accidents? Will it expel from the hearts and lives of men selfishness and folly, improvidence, envy, and ambition? If not, or, in other words, if the old order of things continues, if the world is not, through some great material change and spiritual manifestation, transfigured into a new earth with a

regenerated humanity, we may expect our earth to remain a place where charity will find abundant opportunities for exercise.

It is not nearly so probable that a communistic or collectivistic organisation of society would diminish the need for charity as it is that it would weaken the motives to it and deprive it of resources. Without freedom and the consequent inequality of fortunes there might well have been far more misery in the world than there has been, while there could not have been the wonderful development of charity and of charitable institutions which is so conspicuous in the history of Christendom.

Socialists would abolish charity by providing work for, and rendering it compulsory on, all who are capable of working, and by granting to those who are incapable the supply of their wants in the name, not of charity, but of justice.* Are they sure, however, that they could always provide work for all who need it? Are they sure that they could always provide it on such terms as would be tolerable to workmen? If they are, one would like very much to know their secret. If they have one, they have not yet divulged it. As for the idle and dissolute, those whose poverty is voluntary and disgraceful, how are Socialists to compel them to maintain themselves by labour except by violence or starvation? But we could do it by these means without Socialism; we are only prevented from doing it by our respect for human liberty and our soft-heartedness.

Then, although calling what is really of the nature of charity "justice" is very characteristic of Socialism, it is also a worse than useless device. It can only do harm to confound the provinces of justice and of charity. We ought to give to justice all that belongs to it, and to seek in addition to diffuse and deepen the feeling of the obligatoriness of charity; but we ought not to encourage men to claim pretended rights, and to deaden in them the sense of gratitude for acts of kindness and generosity.

Individuals, voluntary associations, and the Church have often, in their dispensation of charity, committed serious mistakes, and aggravated the evils which they desired to remove. But they have

[* A bill, The Unemployed Workmen's Act, embodying these principles, was introduced in the House of Commons in 1907 and 1908. In the latter year the bill was defeated on the second reading, but it received the support of a considerable body of Liberal as well as of nearly the whole of the Labour members.]

not erred more grievously than has the State. The old English Poor Law was the cause of an enormous amount of poverty and of demoralisation. "England," says Fawcett, "was brought nearer to the brink of ruin by it than she ever was by a hostile army."*

It would be a deplorable policy to entrust the State with the exclusive right to deal with the problem of poverty, or with the means of satisfying all the demands of poverty. The result would assuredly be that the State would waste and abuse the resources foolishly confided to it, and that idleness and vice would be encouraged. The State in its dealings with poverty should only be allowed to act under clear and definite rules, and should be kept rigidly to economy. While it ought to see that all charitable societies and institutions regularly publish honest accounts, and should from time to time carefully inquire into and report on the good and evil results which they are producing, it should, instead of seeking to substitute its own action for free and spontaneous charity, encourage such charity, and only intervene in so far as may be necessary to supply its deficiencies.

Socialism vainly pretends to be able to do away with poverty and misery. But, of course, it could abolish true charity, and arrest the free manifestations of it. It could everywhere substitute for spontaneous and voluntary charity what is already known among us as "legal charity" and "official charity." That, however, would be the reverse of an improvement. "Legal charity" is a contradiction in terms: there can be no charity where there is a legal right or claim, and no choice or freedom. So is "official charity," because even when officials are allowed some degree of liberty and discretion in giving or withholding, what they give is not their own. Hence neither legal nor official charity can be expected to call forth gratitude.

But although charity does not work in order to obtain gratitude, it cannot accomplish its perfect work without evoking it. For gratitude itself is an immense addition to the value of the gifts or effects of charity. It makes material boons moral blessings. It is an intrinsically purifying and elevating emotion, and can never be experienced without making the heart better. When we know it to be sincere, it is the best evidence we can have that he who is now receiving a kindness will in other circumstances be ready to

* "Socialism; its Causes and Remedies," p. 25.

bestow one. Charity to be fully and in a high sense effective must be obviously self-sacrificing, and capable of adapting itself to the particular wants of individuals. The State, acting through law and officials, is incapable of a charity thus real and efficacious. It makes no sacrifice, and it cannot individualise.*

Socialism has been to a certain extent favourable to the diffusion of international or cosmopolitan feeling. It has laboured with success to convince the workmen of different nations that they have common interests. It has taught them to organise themselves internationally with a view to promote these interests. We may well believe that the range of their intellectual vision and of their moral sympathies has been thereby also extended. Possibly the section of British workmen which is most under the influence of socialistic feelings and ideas is the portion of the British people which is least insular in its thoughts and sentiments. Socialism, simply through awakening workmen to a sense of the solidarity of their interests over all the civilised world, has, doubtless, also helped them in some measure towards a true appreciation of the brotherhood of mankind.

And, it must be added, Socialism has further directly inculcated human fraternity. It has explicitly proclaimed universal brotherhood, the love of man as man, irrespective of race, country, and religion. Socialists deserve credit for the earnestness with which they have recommended peace between peoples; for the emphasis and outspokenness with which they have condemned the wars which originate in personal ambition, in the pride or selfishness of dynasties, and in the vanity or envy, the blind prejudices or the unreasoning aversions of nations. They have certainly no sympathy with Jingoism.

Yet on the whole Socialism does not tend to give to the world peace. It is far indeed from being really rooted as some have pretended in the love of man as man. The fraternity which it proclaims is narrow, sectional, and self-contradictory. Such love as it can be honestly credited with possessing is very inferior to the pure, unselfish, all-embracing affection enjoined by Christ

* There is no "individualising," in the sense meant, when a Government official admits the claims of certain applicants for poor-law relief and refuses those of others. The official is only empowered to decide to what legal categories the applicants belong. There should be no administrative freedom beyond what is conferred by the law administered.

and eulogised by St. Paul. It is a class feeling, partial in its scope, mixed in its nature, half love and half hate, generous and noble in some of its elements but envious and mean in others.*

Hence, while Socialism denounces the wars for which Governments are responsible, it at the same time inflames passions, favours modes of thought, and excites to courses of conduct likely to give rise to wars even more terrible and fratricidal. The enmities of class which it evokes may easily lead to greater horrors than those of nations. It is mere credulity to suppose that Socialism is tending to the abolition of war. Wherever there is prevalent a militant and revolutionary Socialism civil war must be imminent and large armies prime necessities. Were Socialism out of the way, we might reasonably hope that the calamity of a great European war would not be wholly without compensation, inasmuch as it might issue in a general disarmament. But so long as in every country of Europe there exists a Socialism ready in the train of such a war to imitate the deeds of the Parisian Commune we cannot reasonably cherish any hope of the kind. At present our civilisation, it has been aptly said, "has an underside to it of terrible menace; as, in ancient Athens, the Cave of the Furies was underneath the rock, on whose top sat the Court of the Areopagus. The Socialism of our day is a real Cave of the Furies. And the Furies are not asleep in their Cave."† The socialistic spirit must be expelled before there can be social peace.

Further, while Socialism has so far favoured internationalism it has, as a general rule, discountenanced patriotism.‡ Of course, no one denies that there has often been much that was spurious

* The defectiveness of the socialistic conception of fraternity is by no means visible only in bad feelings and bad actions towards those who are not manual labourers. It is likewise very strikingly exhibited by the extent to which Socialism belies its professions of sympathy even with the operative classes. Socialistic legislation and socialistic intervention in regard to labour have been largely characterised by injustice and cruelty to the classes of workers most in need of fair treatment and generous aid; largely in favour of the strong and to the injury of the weak—expatriated foreigners, non-unionists, and women. This aspect of Socialism, especially as it has manifested itself in France, has been effectively dealt with by M. Yves Guyot in "La Tyrannie Socialiste."

† R. D. Hitchcock, "Socialism," p. 1 (1879).

[‡ "The Socialist is almost by necessity of his position and principles predisposed to discourage and condemn patriotism." Rae, "Contemporary Socialism," p. 126.]

and foolish, blind and evil, in patriotism, or at least in what professed to be patriotism; much, in a word, deserving of censure and contempt. For discountenancing anything of that nature no blame attaches to Socialism. But unfortunately it has also assailed patriotism itself. Pages on pages might be filled with quotations from socialistic publications in proof of this. Mr. Bax does not misrepresent the common strain and trend of socialistic opinion and sentiment on the point when he writes thus:—"For the Socialist the word frontier does not exist; for him love of country, as such, is no nobler sentiment than love of class. The blustering 'patriot' bigot, big with England's glory, is precisely on a level with the bloated plutocrat, proud to belong to that great 'middle-class' which he assures you is 'the back-bone of the nation.' Race-pride and class-pride are, from the standpoint of Socialism, involved in the same condemnation. The establishment of Socialism, therefore, on any national or race basis is out of the question. No, the foreign policy of the great international socialist party must be to break up those hideous race monopolies called empires, beginning in each case at home. Hence everything which makes for the disruption and disintegration of the empire to which he belongs must be welcomed by the Socialist as an ally."*

That those who are blind to the significance of individuality should thus see nothing to admire in nationality is just what was to be expected. Nationality is for a people what individuality is to a person,—that in it which determines its distinctive form of being and life, which confers on it an organic and moral character, and which impels it to assert and maintain its rights to a free and independent existence and to a national and full self-realisation. Socialism is only logical when it proposes to treat national individuality in the same manner as personal individuality. But it is none the less erroneous on that account.

Nationality is a great and sacred fact. No other principle has been seen in our own age to evoke an enthusiasm more intense, sacrifices more disinterested, exertions more heroic, than that of nationality. Faith in it has built up nations under our very eyes. When the peoples of Europe renounce this faith which has been

* "The Religion of Socialism." On the relation of Socialism to patriotism the reader may profitably consult Bordeau, pp. 86-91 of the work already mentioned.

instilled into them by the words and examples of a Gioberti and Mamiani, a Mazzini, Garibaldi and Kossuth, a Quinet and Hugo, and a host of kindred spirits, for belief in the principle of national disruption and disintegration inculcated by socialists and anarchists, sophists and sceptics, they will make a miserable exchange. The sense of nationality and of its claims, the love of country, patriotism, is neither a fanatical particularism nor a formless egotistical cosmopolitanism. It no more excludes than it is excluded by the love of humanity. Purged from ignorance, so as to be no blind instinct such as makes the wild beast defend its forest or its mountain lair, and purged from selfishness, so as to manifest itself not in contempt or in enmity towards strangers but in readiness to make whatever sacrifices the good of our own countrymen calls for, it is a truly admirable affection, binding, as it does, through manifold ties of sympathy the members of a commonwealth into a single body, raising them above themselves through a consciousness of duties to a land and a people endeared to them by a thousand memories and associations, and so inducing and strengthening them to conform to all the conditions on which the harmony and happiness of national life depend.*

We pass on to consider how Socialism stands related to justice. Justice and benevolence, righteousness and goodness, are neither identical nor separable. The goodness which does not observe and uphold justice is not true goodness; the justice which does not seek to promote the ends of goodness is not true justice.

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* Bishop Westcott has in the following lines beautifully indicated how true patriotism will operate in social and economic life:—"The Christian patriot will bend his energies to this above all things, that he may bring to light the social fellowship of his countrymen. He will not tire in urging others to confess in public, what home makes clear, that love and not interest is alone able to explain and to guide our conduct—love for something outside us, for something above us, for something more enduring than ourselves: that self-devotion and not self-assertion is the spring of enduring and beneficent influence: that each in his proper sphere—workman, capitalist, teacher—is equally a servant of the State feeding in a measure that common life by which he lives: that work is not measured but made possible by the wages rendered to the doer; that the feeling of class is healthy, like the narrower affections of home, till it claims to be predominant: that we cannot dispense, except at the cost of national impoverishment, with the peculiar and independent services of numbers and of wealth and of thought, which respectively embody and interpret the present, the past, and the future: that we cannot isolate ourselves as citizens any more than as men, and that if we willingly offer to our country what we have, we shall in turn share in the rich fulness of the life of all."—"Social Aspects of Christianity," pp. 45-6.

True love of man seeks the highest good of man, which certainly includes righteousness (justice); it will use any means, however painful, which will stimulate and aid man to realise his highest good, and to become what he ought to be. The sense of justice can be satisfied with nothing short of the realisation of righteousness itself; it cannot seek or be satisfied with punishment for its own sake. A man who punishes merely because punishment is deserved, and rests content when deserved punishment is inflicted, cannot be a good man, inasmuch as he seeks not the good of the person he punishes. And he is not even a just man, for it is not the realisation of righteousness but only the punishment of crime that he seeks. Any being who is in the highest and widest sense just, who is truly and completely righteous, must be also benevolent, gracious, and merciful, because a genuine and perfect righteousness desires not only to punish sin but to destroy it and to make every being wholly righteous; and the attainment of this can alone satisfy also absolute love, generosity, and compassion. Conversely, where there is perfect love, a faultless and unlimited benevolence, it must seek the righteousness through which alone its end, the utmost welfare of all, can be reached.

Socialism does well then when it insists that human society ought to be founded on justice and that all the relations of men in society should be conformed to justice. There may be virtues which deserve at times more praise than justice, but it is only when they are in accordance with justice. All affections and all courses of conduct into which the sense of justice does not to some extent enter are not entitled to be regarded as virtues; and if contrary to justice they are vices. Every State, commonwealth, and nation ought to be ethically organic and healthy, and it can only be so when unified, inspired, and ruled by the idea of justice, negative and positive.

While Socialism, however, rightly dwells on the necessity and importance of justice in the institutions and conduct of society it fails to conceive aright of its nature. Its exaggerated conception of the claims of the State and its erroneous economic doctrines make it impossible for those who accept them not to entertain also the most perverted views of justice.

Mr. Henry George must leave on every reader of his eloquent pages the impression that he was an exceptionally large-minded,

good-hearted, rich-natured man. And yet how deplorably false to his better self his socialistic illusions caused him to be. As we have already had to indicate, his sovereign remedy against poverty was the appropriation by the State of the value of land without compensation to its owners. He also argued that the nations of the world should repudiate their debts. And he blamed the Government presided over by honest Abraham Lincoln for not devolving the whole cost of the war which preserved the American union and abolished slavery on a few wealthy citizens; for "shrinking from taking if necessary 999,000 dollars from every man who had a million." Compared with such views as these, Weitling's justification of petty theft as a legitimate means of redressing social wrongs seems almost pardonable. One may easily find far more excuse for an ignorant and wretched common pickpocket stealing a handkerchief or a purse than for great and civilised nations, jealous of their honour and reputation, committing such acts of gigantic villainy as those of which Mr. George approved.

I have just referred to Mr. George merely for the sake of illustration. He was not at all exceptional in the reference under consideration; and, as a matter of course, did not go even so far in the advocacy of iniquity as those who are more thoroughgoing Socialists. Mr. Gronlund, for example, holds that men have got no natural rights whatever, that the State gives them all the rights they have, that it "may do anything whatsoever which is shown to be expedient," and that, as against it, "even labour does not give us a particle of title to what our hands and brains produce."

All thorough Socialists who think with any degree of clearness must be aware that what they mean by justice is what other people mean by theft. But few of them, perhaps, have so frankly and clearly avowed that such is the case as Mr. Bax in the following noteworthy sentences:—"It is on this notion of *justice* that the crucial question turns in the debates between the advocates of modern Socialism and modern Individualism respectively. The bourgeois idea of justice is crystallised in the notion of the absolute right of the individual to the possession and full control of such property as he has acquired without overt breach of the bourgeois law. To interfere with this right of his, to abolish his possession, is in bourgeois eyes the quintessence of injustice. The socialist idea of justice is crystallised in the notion of the absolute right of the

community to the possession or control (at least) of all wealth not intended for direct individual use. Hence the abolition of the individual possession and control of such property, or, in other words, its confiscation, is the first expression of socialist *justice*. Between *possession* and *confiscation* is a great gulf fixed, the gulf between the bourgeois and the socialist worlds. . . . *Justice* being henceforth identified with *confiscation* and *injustice* with *the rights of property*, there remains only the question of 'ways and means.' Our bourgeois apologist, admitting as he must that the present possessors of land and capital *hold* possession of them simply by right of superior force, can hardly refuse to admit the right of the proletariat organised to that end to *take* possession of them by right of superior force. The only question remaining is, How? And the only answer is, How you can. Get what you can that tends in the right direction, by parliamentary means or otherwise, *bien entendu*, the right direction meaning that which curtails the capitalist's power of exploitation. If you choose to ask, further, how one would like it, the reply is, so far as the present writer is concerned, one would like it to come as drastically as possible, as the moral effect of sudden expropriation would be much greater than that of any gradual process. But the sudden expropriation, in other words the revolutionary crisis, will have to be led up to by a series of non-revolutionary political acts, if past experience has anything to say in the matter. When that crisis comes, the great act of confiscation will be the seal of the new era; then and not till then will the knell of civilisation with its rights of property and its class-society be sounded; then and not till then will *justice* —the *justice* not of civilisation but of Socialism—become the corner-stone of the social arch."*

The reasoning in the above passage may commend itself to advanced Socialists, and has probably been in substance employed and approved of from time immemorial by the members of the ancient fraternity of thieves; but looked at from a logical and dispassionate point of view it is far from convincing.

Mr. Bax's "bourgeois" is one of his favourite "abstractions;" but as mythical as "the man in the moon." What he calls "the bourgeois idea of justice" is one too crude and too absurd to have been ever entertained by any minority however small. If he had

* "The Ethics of Socialism."

known of even one " bourgeois apologist " who admitted " that the present possessors of land and capital *hold* possession of them simply by right of superior force," he would doubtless have been ready enough to give us his name. His " bourgeois," " bourgeois idea of justice," and " bourgeois apologist " are, in short, mere fictions of his own invention.

It must be admitted, however, that Mr. Bax has represented his Socialist as just as devoid of either common or moral sense as his bourgeois. He represents him as maintaining " an absolute right " of confiscating the property of individuals. Socialists generally believe in no " absolute rights," and especially in no " absolute rights " of property. Does Mr. Bax himself hold that either the possession or the confiscation of property is absolutely either just or unjust? Does he believe that the justice or the injustice of either the one or the other is not dependent on moral reasons or does not presuppose a moral law? If he does not he has no right to identify a struggle for justice with a mere struggle of opposing forces. If he does he ought to hold that might is right, and that confiscation and expropriation by the right of superior force will be justice even in the era of Socialism.

The defectiveness of the socialistic idea of justice makes itself apparent in the socialistic Claim of Rights. The rights which Socialists maintain should be added to those already generally and justly recognised are imaginary rights, and inconsistent not only with those which have been gained, but with one another.

They are reducible to three—the right to live; the right to labour; and the right of each one to receive the entire produce of his labour.

(1) There is the right to live, the right to existence. By this right is meant the right to be provided with a living, the right to be guaranteed a subsistence. It assumes that society owes to each of its members as much as he needs for his support, and that those of them who have not been able to procure this for themselves are entitled to claim it as their due, and to take it.

Says J. G. Fichte: " All right of property is founded on the contract of all with all which runs thus: We hold all on the condition that we leave thee what is thine. As soon therefore as any one cannot live by his labour that which is his own is withheld from him; the contract, consequently, so far as he is concerned,

is entirely annulled; and from that moment he is no longer under rightful obligation to recognise any man's property. In order that such insecurity of property may not thus be introduced through him, all must, as a matter of right and of civil contract, give him from what they themselves possess enough on which to live. From the moment that any one is in want there belongs to no one that portion of his property which is required to save the needy one from want, but it rightfully belongs to him who is in want."*

This so-called right found an influential advocate in Louis Blanc, and received the sanction of the Provisional Government of France in 1848. A real right, however, it is not. And the State which acknowledges it to be such is unlikely to be able to fulfil what it undertakes. A right constituted by mere need is one which so many may be expected to have that all will soon be in need. Society as at present organised has entered into no contract, come under no obligation, which binds it as a matter of right to support any of its members. It is their duty to support themselves, and they are left free to do so in any rightful way, and to go to any part of the world where they can do so.

Of course, were society organised as Social Democracy demands, were the collectivist system established, it would be otherwise. When society deprives individuals of the liberty of providing for themselves where and how they please, when it appropriates the capital and instruments of labour of all the individuals who compose it, it obviously becomes its bounden duty to supply them with the means of living. That the establishment of Socialism, however, would thus originate such a right is no indication that it is a genuine right, while it is a weighty reason for not establishing a system which would impose on society so awful a responsibility.

"Society," thus wrote the late Dr. Roswell D. Hitchcock, "in absorbing the individual, becomes responsible for his support; while the individual, in being absorbed, becomes entitled to support. This was the doctrine of Proudhon's famous essay. Nature, he said, is bountiful. She has made ample provision for us all, if each could only get his part. Birth into the world entitles one to a living in it. This sounds both humane and logical. And it is logical. The right of society to absorb implies the duty to support; while the duty of the individual to be absorbed implies the right to be

* "Werke," iii., 213.

supported. But premise and conclusion are equally false. Society has no right to absorb the individual, and consequently is under no obligation to support him so long as he is able to support himself; while the individual has no business to be absorbed, and no right to be supported. Experience has taught us to beware of the man who says that society owes him a living. The farmer has learned not to leave his cellar door open when such theorists are about. Society has entered into no contract to support anybody who is able to support himself, any more than Providence has entered into such a contract. Providence certainly is a party to no such contract, or there was a flagrant breach of contract in the Chinese famine lately; and there have been a great many such breaches of contract, first and last."*

The denial of the right in question does not imply the denial of duty on the part either of individuals or of communities towards those who are in want. Duty and right are not always and in all respects co-extensive. The individual is in duty bound to be not only just but generous and charitable towards his fellow-men; but they have no rights on his generosity and charity, as they have on his justice. The only right which a man has that is co-extensive with his duty is that of being unhindered in the discharge of his duty. As regards his rights in relation to others his duty may very often be not to assert or to exercise them.

So with a community. A community may often be morally bound to do far more on grounds of humanity and expediency than it is bound to do of strict right or justice. For example, although parents have not a natural right to demand that the State shall educate their children, and may rightfully be compelled by it to educate them at their own cost, yet it is of such vast importance to a State to have all its citizens, even the poorest, physically and intellectually, morally and spiritually, well-trained, that it may be amply justified, from the point of view of the national welfare, in providing for all its young people an adequate education, the burden of defraying the expenses of which may fall chiefly on the richer class of parents, and, to a considerable extent, on those who are not parents.

Holding that the support of the poor who are unable to work is only a matter of charity does not imply that support is not to

* "Socialism," pp. 49-51.

be given, or that in the case of the deserving poor it ought not to be given liberally and in such a way as may inflict no sense of humiliation on the recipients. When men have worked steadily and faithfully during the years of their strength in any useful occupation a system securing for them pensions in old age would only, I think, be the realisation of a genuine right which they had fairly and honourably earned. Those who bring about the realisation of this right will deserve to rank high among the benefactors of the working classes and among true patriots.*

(2) The right to labour. It should be distinguished from "the right to existence," although it has often been confounded with it. The right to labour can belong only to those who are capable of labour, and implicitly denies to them the right to existence, the right to be supported, merely because of destitution. Were the right to existence affirmed without condition or limit, few would be likely to claim a right to labour for such means of existence as they already had an acknowledged right to simply in virtue of their needing them.

The "right to labour" (*droit au travail*) is altogether different from the "right of labour" (*droit de travailler*) which Turgot, in a famous edict signed by Louis XVI in 1776, describes as "the property of every man, and of all property the first, the most sacred, and the most imprescriptible." By the "right of labour" was meant the right of every man to full freedom as a labourer; the right of every man to be uninterfered with by Monarchs or Parliaments, by Corporations or Combinations, in his search for labour, in the exercise of his faculties of labour, and in the disposal or enjoyment of the products of his labour. The "right to labour" means a right on the part of the labourer to have labour supplied to him, and necessarily implies that labour must be so organised and regulated that all labourers can be supplied with labour. The one right—that affirmed by physiocratists, economists, free-traders, and liberals of all classes—signifies a right to such liberty as cannot be withheld without manifest injustice. The other right—that demanded by Socialists—signifies a right to such protection as can

* There is a good essay by Dr. Julius Platter on *Das Recht auf Existenz* in his "Kritische Beiträge zur Erkenntniss unserer socialen Zustände und Theorien," 1894. The lengthy chapter professedly devoted to the *Droit à l'existence* in Malon's "Socialisme Intégral" (t. ii. pp. 119-168) really treats of charitable assistance, public beneficence, and social insurance.

only be secured through the withdrawal of liberty. What is claimed by the spurious right is virtually the abolition of the genuine one.

The basis of right is not charity but justice. Hence a right may not be withheld from any one; whoever is refused his right is defrauded. Any State which recognises the right to labour breaks faith with the citizens, deceives and mocks them, if it fails to supply them with the labour of which they are in need.

But can a State reasonably hope to be able to provide labour for all its citizens who may be in need of it? Not unless it is invested with vast powers. Not unless it is allowed to dispose of the property and to control the actions of its members to a most dangerous extent.

Recognition of the right to labour must, it is obvious, of itself create an extraordinary demand for the labour which the State acknowledged itself bound to supply. For it could not fail to take away from individuals the motives which had constrained them to seek labour for themselves, to be careful not to lose it when they had got it, and to make while they had it what provision they could for supporting themselves when they might not have it. In other words, the State, by assuming the responsibility of finding and providing labour for the unemployed would necessarily encourage indolence and improvidence, favour the growth of irregular and insubordinate conduct among those engaged in industrial occupation, diminish individual enterprise and energy, and deaden the sense of personal responsibility. And the obvious consequence of its thus demoralising its citizens by leading them to trust to its intervention instead of depending on their own exertions is that it would find itself necessitated to employ and to support them in large numbers, and in always increasing numbers, as they would become continually less inclined and less fitted to take care of themselves.

It would, of course, be in seasons of industrial and commercial depression, when there was least demand for the products of labour at prices which would cover the cost of their production, that the greatest number of men would apply to the State to implement its declaration of the right to labour. But during such a season a British Government, were the right to labour embodied in British law, might find itself bound to provide labour for millions of persons. To meet such an obligation it would require to have enormous wealth at its disposal; and that it could only procure by an enormous appropriation of the capital of individuals.

The right of the citizens to labour implies the duty of the State to provide labour. But to provide labour means providing all that renders labour possible ; all the money, materials, tools, machinery, buildings, etc., required for carrying on labour. That clearly involves on the part of the State the necessity of incurring vast expense, and, if only a temporary emergency be met thereby, vast loss.

Further, the so-called right in question implies the right to appropriate labour, to be paid at the current and normal price of such labour. The State and public bodies have often in hard times given masses of the unemployed work and wages. But the work given in such cases has always been work of the kind which it was supposed that any person could do somehow, and which it was not expected, perhaps, that any person would do well ; and the wages given have generally been only such as were deemed sufficient to keep hunger away. Now, that is consistent and defensible in the present state of opinion and of law, but not if the unemployed are recognised to have, instead of merely the claim which destitution has on humanity and charity, a real and strict right to be provided with labour. In the latter case there could be no justification of setting the most dissimilar classes of workmen to the same kind of work, without regard to what they were severally fitted for. If a weaver or a watchmaker has a right to be provided with the means or instruments of labour, those which they are entitled to receive cannot be the pick, spade, and wheelbarrow of a navvy.

Further, if there is a right to labour, men employed by the State ought in no circumstances to be paid less for their labour than men of the same class who are employed by private individuals. In a word, if there is a right to labour it must be one which may well be formulated as it was by Proudhon in the following terms: "The right to labour is the right which every citizen, whatever be his trade or profession, has to constant employment therein, at a wage fixed not arbitrarily or at hazard, but according to the actual and normal rate of wages."*

But the acknowledgment by the State of the right to labour thus understood would obviously lead to the destruction of the present economic régime. It would make it necessary for the State

* "Le Droit au Travail et le Droit de Propriété," p. 13, ed. 1850.

to undertake such an organisation of labour as would produce a complete social revolution. It would devolve on it the duty of engaging in every kind of industry and trade, of becoming a capitalist and an undertaker and a manager of labour to an enormous and indefinite extent. The end of this could only be that the State would find itself compelled to suppress all freedom and competition in the sphere of economics, to appropriate all the means and materials necessary to the carrying on of all branches of industry and commerce, and to take all labour into its own employment and under its own guidance. The affirmation of the right of individuals to labour is thus by implication the denial of their right to property. The former right can only be given effect to through a transference of the ownership of the means of production from private holders to the State or the community. Well might Proudhon say, as he did one day in 1848 while engaged in a discussion with the then French Minister of Finance: "Oh! mon Dieu, Monsieur Goudchaux, si vous me passez le droit au travail, je vous cède le droit de propriété."

Notwithstanding, however, that the whole socialistic system would naturally evolve and establish itself from acceptance of the right to labour, contemporary Socialism has shown little zeal to get the right affirmed and guaranteed by law. This may on first thoughts seem strange; but Socialists have had considerable reason for their reticence and self-restraint in this respect. To recognise the right in the existing economic order would in all likelihood speedily result in such serious troubles as would discredit those who were responsible for the step and cause a reaction from Socialism. Doing so proved fatal to the French Republic of 1848. Even Victor Considérant and Louis Blanc acknowledged this, although they contended, and perhaps justly, that the workmen of Paris left the Provisional Government no option in the matter. The events of that period form a page of history bearing on the right to labour not easy either to forget or to misinterpret; and they go far to explain why since 1848 the right in question has been so little insisted on by the advocates of Socialism.

Apparently Socialists have, in general, come to see that the right to labour cannot be made effective in the capitalist era. Possibly those of them who have reflected on the subject may have felt that it would be difficult to prove that it could be made effective

even in the collectivist era. In my opinion that would be very difficult indeed to prove.*

The right to labour as understood by Socialists finds no support in the idea or sense of justice. The claim to be unhindered in the search for labour and in the exercise of one's powers of labour for one's own advantage is manifestly just. The claim to be provided with labour by the labour and at the expense of others is of an entirely different character, and manifestly unjust.†

(3) The right of the labourer to the whole produce of his labour. This alleged right had been announced and advocated more than half a century before Marx undertook its defence. Among those

* In an article on "The Right to Labour," published in *The Free Review* (1894), Mr. J. T. Blanchard makes a praiseworthy attempt to show under what conditions the right to labour can be made effective in the socialistic régime. He regards them as these three:

(1) *The growing utilisation of all the forces of nature, including land;*
(2) *A wise regulation of the birth-rate;* and
(3) *A widening of markets, an increase in the demand for goods.*

As to (1), Mr. Blanchard has forgotten to deal with the arguments of those who contend that under a régime which would suppress individual initiative and enterprise, and dispense with motives to personal exertion to the extent that Collectivism inevitably must, the utilisation of the forces of nature would proceed more slowly than now. This is a large and serious omission.

As to (2), most Socialists will probably be surprised and disappointed to hear that any regulation of the birth-rate will be needed in the Collectivist era. What surprises and disappoints me is that Mr. Blanchard should not have told us what he means by "a wise regulation of the birth-rate." Can any other regulation of it be wise than such as may be effected through so moralising men and women that they will be habitually self-restraining, prudent, and right-minded? If Mr. Blanchard means by "wise regulation" what some of his collaborateurs—what the members of the Malthusian League and many Socialists—mean by it, it is what would lead to the most shocking demoralisation of the labouring classes. Like Mr. Blanchard, I accept every essential proposition contained in the theory of Malthus. But Malthus would have disowned with horror the Malthusian League.

As to (3), Mr. Blanchard does not seem to realise that consumption is conditioned and limited by production; that markets cannot be widened *ad libitum;* that an effective demand for goods is one which implies possession of the means of paying for them. Failure to perceive this elementary truth is often apparent in the writings and reasonings of Socialists.

† The most important book on the right to labour is:—"Le Droit au Travail à l'Assemblée Nationale, recueil complet de tous les discours prononcés dans cette mémorable discussion par MM. Fresneau, Hubert Delisle, Levet, Cazalès, Lamartine, Gaultier de Rumilly, Pelletier, A. de Toqueville, Ledru-Rollin, Duvergier de Hauranne, Crémieux, Barthe, Gaslonde, De Luppé, Arnaud (de l'Arriège), Thiers, Considérant, Bouhier de l'Ecluse, Martin-Bernard, Billault, Dufaure, Glais-Bizoin, Goudchaux, Lagrange, Félix Pyat et Marius André (textes revus par les Orateurs), suivis de l'opinion de MM. Marrast, Proudhon, L. Blanc, Ed. Laboulaye et Cormenin; avec des observations inédites par MM. Léon Faucher, Wolowski, Fréd. Bastiat, de Parien, et une introduction et des notes par M. Joseph Garnier. Paris, chez Guillaumin et Cie. 1848."

who preceded him were William Godwin, Charles Hall, William Thompson, Enfantin, and Proudhon.*

According to these precursors of Marx, what the labourer is naturally entitled to receive in return for his labours is the entire use of all the things which he actually produces by it; and what prevents him from obtaining his due, the whole fruit of his labour, and compels him to accept instead, under the name of wages, a mere fraction thereof, is the power which wealth gives its possessors to take advantage of those who are in poverty. Hence they regarded rent, interest, profits, and, in a word, all the components of the wealth of the rich, as appropriations of the products of the unpaid labour of the poor.

Marx accepted this doctrine, argued very elaborately and ingeniously in its support, and had extraordinary success in persuading certain classes of persons to believe that he had proved it. Such was his relationship to it. He did not originate it. And, as has been shown in former chapters, he did not really prove it. There is no likelihood that it ever will be proved.

The right in question has never been recognised in practice. The "state of nature" to which some would trace it back is itself a myth. Where social bonds are weak and loose, as among many rude peoples, right is largely confounded with force, and the prevalent rule of distributing wealth is

> "the simple plan,
> That they should take who have the power,
> And they should keep who can."

Where social bonds are strong and firm, where the principle of liberty or individuality is feeble in comparison with that of authority or of society, and the man is merged in the family, clan, city, or nation, the produce of the labour of all the members of the community is regarded as belonging to its head, to the patriarch, chief, or king. The rights of labour are more fully acknowledged at the present day than they have been in any previous period of the world's history. But nowhere even now do labourers of any class receive in return for their labour all that it produces.

Ought they to receive all that their labour produces? This question suggests the naturally prior one: What is meant when

* The history of the claim put forth on behalf of labour to a right to the full product has been carefully traced by Professor Anton Menger—"Das Recht auf den vollen Arbeitsertrag in geschichtlicher Darstellung." 1891.

we affirm that all that labour produces should belong to those whose labour it is? And obviously this latter question may be answered in two ways. For labour may either be credited with producing all that it is the direct factor of producing—all that it seems to immediate outward sense to produce; or, it may be granted that labour is so dependent on and aided by other factors of production that its real produce is less than its apparent produce, and it is only entitled fully to receive the former. The first meaning is the only one which is either clear or definite. It is also the only one which admits of any socialistic application. Let us, therefore, realise what it implies.

Houses are things produced by labour. Here, let us say, is a house worth five thousand pounds. Apparently it is wholly the product of the labour expended on it; directly it is exactly in every respect what that labour has made it to be. If, then, the right under consideration, understood as indicated, is a real right, the house itself is the natural and just reward of the labours of those engaged in the building of it, and they have been defrauded unless they have received either the house itself, or its full equivalent—*i.e.*, as much in wages as would purchase the house.

The claim which the right alleged, thus understood, would confer is certainly not one that can be charged with obscurity or vagueness. It is beautifully clear and definite. But it is none the less a very extraordinary one. It is so exorbitant that workmen, by insisting on it, would ruin instead of enriching themselves. Were those whose occupation it is to build houses to claim to be the proprietors of the houses which they built nobody would employ them. The trade of building houses would cease to exist. Every man would be compelled to build his own house or to do without one.

In existing social conditions the claim is also manifestly unjust. Labour divorced from land and capital cannot be entitled to receive the whole produce. Before the workmen who make a house can claim with any appearance of justice to have earned it by making it, the ground on which it stands, the materials of which it is composed, the capital expended on their maintenance when engaged on it, and everything else required to attain the result reached, must have been their own. But none of these conditions are fulfilled, nor can be fulfilled, so long as the old order based on the individual appropriation of land and capital endures.

True, Socialists maintain that the conditions ought to be fulfilled; that land and other national agents should be free to all; that capital should bear no interest or profit; and, in short, that every institution and arrangement which prevents the labourer from receiving the full produce of his labour shall be done away with. But even were this proved it would not in the least follow that the abstractions from the produce of labour referred to are not morally demanded in society as actually constituted; all that would be made out is that it is a duty to endeavour so to reconstitute society that there will be no warrant for such abstractions, and that the claims of perfect or ideal justice in regard to the remuneration of labour should be satisfied. Until, however, the revolution effecting such reconstruction has been accomplished in a just way the rights inseparable from the actual constitution of society cannot justly be disregarded.

I do not admit, of course, that Socialists have shown that there is any ethical necessity for such a reconstitution of society as would secure to labour alone all that is produced. In previous chapters (iv.-vii.) I have argued to the contrary, and endeavoured to point out the futility of their reasons for representing private property in land and capital, rent, interest, and profits as essentially unjust.

Nor do I grant that even were society organised on collectivist principles labour would or could be put in possession of the whole produce. There must still be abstractions therefrom of the same nature as those which are now made, although they might, perhaps, be called by different names. That they would be less in proportion to the whole produce than at present is very doubtful.

There has never yet been delineated an ideal of society which would, if realised, secure to labour all that Socialists promise it. The ideal of Social Democracy could, it is obvious, only be carried out by a system of officialism not likely to be less expensive and burdensome than landlordism or capitalism. No *social* state, indeed, is conceivable in which the so-called right of labour to the entire produce can be satisfied. Wherever there are social ties and obligations men must give as well as get, pay for assistance afforded as well as be paid for services rendered. The only state of human existence in which labour can be reasonably expected to get the entire produce is a non-social state. A man has only to renounce all social advantages, to go where the bounties of nature

are still unappropriated and to employ in his labour his own resources and instruments, skill and strength, and he will not only deserve but actually get all that he produces. Yet what he gets will most probably be much less than he might have got in the social state, notwithstanding its inevitable burdens.

If labour is allowed to be only one of the factors of production, and all that it produces only a part of what is produced, the right of labour to all that it produces can, of course, only mean a right to such part of what is produced as may be its due, as may be reasonable and just. The right thus understood cannot be denied, but neither is it worth discussing. What is it that is due, reasonable, just? We are left to find that out; and no one has yet discovered, or is likely to discover, that what is due to labour is any definite proportion or invariable quantity of the total produce of the work done in any occupation or trade, community or nation.*

We have now seen the defectiveness of the socialistic idea of justice, and how it has given rise to demands for fictitious rights. It has still to be added, however, that socialistic teachers have been particularly chargeable with the error of dwelling too exclusively on rights and insisting too little on duties. All who are ambitious of being party leaders are sure to be tempted thus to err, seeing that all classes of men with class aims, or with party interests prefer hearing of their rights to being reminded of their duties. Working men will hear you gladly if you expatiate on their rights and the duties of their employers. Employers will admire your good sense if you defend their rights and dwell on the duties of the employed. To teach to rich and poor, employers and employed, to all classes of men alike, the obligations of duty first, and their rights next, as arising from the discharge of their duties, is very far from being the shortest or the easiest path to popularity or to any of the ends which the demagogue seeks. But it is the only one which will be pursued by those who aim solely and unselfishly either at the private or the public good of men.

Rights, indeed, are precious and sacred. Often when we might forego them were they merely our own, we are in duty bound to assert and vindicate them because they are also those of others.

[* For a very full discussion of this question, see Mallock's "A Critical Examination of Socialism" (1908).]

In the course of the struggle for "rights" great and indubitable services have been rendered to mankind. Nevertheless, the only proper supreme and guiding idea of life, whether personal or social, is not that of right but of duty. Only the man whose ruling conviction is that of duty can be morally strong, self-consistent, and noble; can control his own spirit, conquer the world, sacrifice himself for others, and in all relations act as becomes a being in whose nature there is so much that is spiritual and divine. Only a nation pervaded by a sense of the supremacy of duty, and by that respect for divine law, and that recognition of the claims of self-denial and self-sacrifice for others, for ideal ends and for great causes, which are involved in the sense of duty, can be one in which class properly co-operates with class for the good of the whole, in which individual and sectional interests apparently conflicting are successfully harmonised, and in which the citizens, notwithstanding all natural inequalities and all diversities of position and circumstance, form a true brotherhood.

Tell men only of their rights, tell them only that others are wronging them out of their rights to liberty, to property, to power, to enjoyment, and that they must assert and secure their rights, and you appeal, indeed, in some measure to their conscience, their sense of justice; but you appeal as much or more to their selfishness, hate, envy, jealousy; and if you infuse into them a certain strength to cast down and pull to pieces much which may deserve demolition, you render them unlikely to stop where they ought in the work of destruction, and utterly unfit them for the still more needed work of construction. Hence all revolutions which have been effected by men prejudiced and excited through such teaching have been, even when essentially just, disgraced by shameful excesses, and only very partially, if at all, successful. Those who have gained rights which they have been taught to think of as advantages, but not as responsibilities, always abuse them. No society in which men who have been thus perverted and misled are in the majority, no society in which the sense of duty does not prevail can fail to be one in which class is at constant war with class, no such society can enjoy peace, security, or prosperity.

This truth has found its worthiest prophet and apostle in Joseph Mazzini; and to his writings, and especially to his work "On the Duties of Man," I refer such of my readers as desire fully to realise

its significance. He rightly traced to disregard of it much of the moral weakness and disorganisation of that Democracy for the advance and triumph of which he so unselfishly laboured; and he justly held the one-sided moral teaching of the revolutionary and socialistic propagandists of the age to have been largely responsible for that disregard itself. There has certainly been no improvement in this respect since he wrote. The Socialism of to-day is more radical and revolutionary in its proposals, more intent on class and party advantages, and more averse to dwell on the supreme and universal claims of duty than were the forms in which Socialism appeared in the earlier half of the century. The spirit which animates Social Democracy is the very spirit which Mazzini was so anxious to see cast out of Democracy. The Mazzinian and the Marxian ideals of democratic society are moral contraries. Immense issues depend on which of them may prevail.

While the common error of Socialists is insisting on rights in a way inconsistent with the primacy of duty, the error of uprooting and annulling rights through affirming a false conception of duty is not unknown among them. Mr. Gronlund, for example, conceiving of the State as strictly an organism, and actually relat to its citizens as a tree to its cells, denies that individuals have natural rights, and affirms that the State gives them wh rights they have. "This conception of the State as an org he says, "consigns 'the rights of man' to obscurity and p in the foreground."* And certainly it consigns the righ to obscurity; entirely robs man of his essential and rights as a moral agent. But this is done not by put the foreground; it is done by obliterating duty an servility for it. What is got rid of is morality al the form of duty and of right.

Other Socialists reach a similar result by i the majority with absolute authority in th interesting to note, however, that those consider that the will of the majority is the source and law of right and duty wh creed. At present "the will of the idol, which may properly be trea

* "The Co-operative Commonweal

enlightened era which is approaching it will be a socialist deity, and its decrees must be reverently received and implicitly obeyed. This is the socialistic form of the *cultus* of the majority. In every form, however, any such *cultus* is obviously incompatible with a true view of the nature and claims of morality.

CHAPTER XI

SOCIALISM AND RELIGION

How is Socialism related to Religion? To this question different and conflicting answers have been given.

1. Some have held that there is no essential relation, no natural or necessary connection between them. It cannot be denied that they may act, and really do act, on each other; but it may be denied that they ever so act otherwise than casually, or, in other words, owing to the influence of circumstances, the conjuncture of contingencies. And this denial has been made. Socialism, according to those to whom I refer, is occupied only with economic interests, and has properly nothing to do with religious concerns, while Religion is a " private affair," one intrinsically spiritual and individual. A Socialist may be of any religion or of no religion. In discussing Socialism it is irrelevant to refer to Religion. To attach any importance to imputations of materialism, infidelity and atheism against Socialists is " bad form ; " it is to have recour to an unfair and happily almost obsolete style of controve " We have found by the experience of centuries that these we are the most readily turned against the best and wisest me we no longer employ them in our political and economic w

There must be admitted to be some truth in this v economic and the religious questions in Socialism a separable but ought to be so far separated. Social entitled to expect that their economic hypotheses of, in the first place at least, on economic gro religious and all other non-economic considerati Socialism may be justified in confining his atte doctrine. No person is bound to treat o tively. That there are religious as well a is undeniable ; and to impute falsely atheism to any man, wise or foolish,

* Mr. Bosanquet in the Preface to his tra of Social Democracy."

unjustifiable. The experience of centuries has undoubtedly shown it to be grievous error to drag Religion irrelevantly into any discussion, or so to make use of it as to embitter and to degrade any discussion.

Still the view in question is, in the main, erroneous. There is not enough of truth in it to have gained it much acceptance. Of all views on the relation of Religion to Socialism, it is the one which fewest people have been found to adopt. And Socialists have as generally and decidedly rejected it as non-Socialists. The religious among them are almost unanimous in holding that Religion, as they conceive of it, is necessary to the completeness and efficiency of their Socialism. The non-religious among them, with rare exceptions, look on Religion as naturally antagonistic to the growth and triumph of all genuine Socialism.

It would have been strange if it had been otherwise. Socialism is not pure science, not mere theory; it is a doctrine or scheme of social organisation, and no such doctrine or scheme can ignore or exclude Religion without being seriously defective. Social organisation is not merely economic organisation; it implies the harmonising of all the factors, institutions, and interests of society, political, moral, and religious, as well as economic. [illegible]conomic organisation, indeed, can no more be successfully [illegible]ected if dissevered from religion than if dissociated from [illegible]lity or political action. The life of a society, like the life [illegible]individual, is a whole, and all the elements, organs, and func- [illegible]hich such life implies are so intimately interconnected that [illegible]nfluences and is influenced by all the others. They cannot [illegible]ed without injury or destruction to themselves and the [illegible]ism. Dissection is only practicable on the dead. All [illegible]mere economic organisation must necessarily be un- [illegible]d so far from its being irrelevant in discussing [illegible]to Religion, any examination of Socialism which [illegible]its religious bearings must be incomplete. The [illegible]es should indeed warn us to be on our guard [illegible]rging economic or political systems with [illegible]o less warn us against fancying that such [illegible]lves with atheism or irreligion without

*

[illegible]tion between Socialism and Religion

[illegible]oted *ante*, p. 22.]

is that it is one of identity, that they are substantially the same thing, that Socialism in its perfection is Religion at its best.

This is a view which has been widely entertained. The Socialism which appeared in France in the early part of the last century, although it originated in the irreligious materialism and revolutionary radicalism of the latter part of the preceding century, came gradually after the Restoration to assume an anti-revolutionary and comparatively religious character and tone. Saint-Simon closed his career with presenting his social doctrine as a New Christianity, the result and goal of the entire past religious development of humanity; and on this New Christianity Enfantin and his adherents sought to raise the New Church of the future. Fourier, Considérant, Cabet, and Leroux all felt that society could not be held together, reinvigorated, and reorganised by mere reasoning and science, but required also the force and life which faith and religion can alone impart. At the same time, like Saint-Simon, they regarded historical Christianity as effete and sought to discover substitutes for it capable of satisfying both the natural and the spiritual wants of man. The great aim of Auguste Comt from 1847 until his death in 1857 was so to transform his philoso into a religion that it would be adequate to the task of organ and regulating all the activities and institutions of hum In Germany Fr. Feuerbach,* Josiah Deitzgen,† Dr. S Julius Stern,§ and others, have presented substantially t view.

In England it has found an advocate in Mr. Bax. Th words of his are as explicit as could be desired: "I Socialism is not religious will be now clear. It u the 'other world' with all its stage properties—tha objects of religion. In what sense it is not irreli I think, tolerably clear. It brings back religi earth, which, as we have sought to show, wa It looks beyond the present moment or the indeed, though not to another world, but social life in this world. It is in the hop

* "Die Religion der Zukunft," 1843-5.
† "Die Religion der Socialdemokratie."
‡ "Die Erlösung der darbenden Mens
§ "Die Religion der Zukunft," 3 A
Socialismus," 4 Aufl., 1891.

higher social life, ever-widening, ever-intensifying, whose ultimate possibilities are beyond the power of language to express or of thought to conceive, that the Socialist finds his ideal, his religion. He sees in the reconstruction of society in the interest of all, in the rehabilitation, in a higher form and without its limitations, of the old communal life—the proximate end of all present endeavour. . . . In Socialism the current antagonisms are abolished, the separation between politics and religion has ceased to be since their object-matter is the same. The highest feelings of devotion to the Ideal are not conceived as different in kind, much less as concerned with a different sphere, to the commoner human emotions, but merely as diverse aspects of the same fact. The stimulus of personal interest no longer able to poison at its source all beauty, all affection, all heroism, in short, all that is highest in us; the sphere of government merged in that of industrial direction; the limit of the purely industrial itself ever receding as the applied powers of Nature lessen the amount of drudgery required; Art, and the pursuit of beauty and of truth ever covering the ground left free by the 'necessary work of the world'—such is the goal [illegible]ing immediately before us, such the unity of human interest [illegible] of human life which Socialism would evolve out of the clashing [illegible]gonisms, the anarchical individualism, religious and irreligious, [illegible]ted in the rotting world of to-day—and what current religion [illegible]er a higher ideal or a nobler incentive than this essentially [illegible]one?"*

[illegible]empts which have been made to identify Religion and [illegible]re not without interest. They show us how social [illegible] most hostile to current Religion are constrained to [illegible]hat something of a kindred nature and power is [illegible] the higher life of man and to the progress and [illegible]munities; that a positive faith which may not [illegible]termed religious is an essential condition of [illegible]. They testify also to an eagerness in their [illegible]' a golden age, a time of bliss, is near—one [illegible] will be reconciled, and all the wants of the [illegible]ch is itself of pathetic interest, springing [illegible]er of soul. There is nothing in their [illegible]ts to justify their optimism. Their

wish is sole father to their thought. Faith is seen still struggling to rise in them, although they have cast away all its supports.

Criticism of the attempts referred to is not necessary. While professing to preserve Religion, they in reality suppress it. They would " abolish current antagonisms " by sacrificing the spirit to the flesh and the " other world " to this world; by denying God and deifying humanity. The identification of Socialism and Religion at which they arrive assumes the identity of Religion and Atheism. They neither solve antinomies of thought nor reconcile antagonisms of life; they neither remove intellectual difficulties nor serve practical ends. Those who have regarded them as great philosophical achievements have been deceived by equivocal terms and boastful pretensions.

3. Another view as to the relation of Socialism to Religion is that it is essentially one of harmony—Religion and Socialism implying, supporting, and supplementing each other.

This view prevails among those who accept Religion in its proper acceptation, and who at the same time believe, or fancy they believe, in genuine Socialism. It is prevalent, therefore, among so-called Christian Socialists, whether actually Socialists or merely pseudo-Socialists. The great majority of so-called Christian Socialists are, in my opinion, not really Socialists.* They are simply good Christian men anxious that society should be imbued with the spirit and ruled by the principles of Christ, and that Christ's Church and its members should faithfully discharge their duties to society. As all good and Christian men must do, they wish to see all men happier than they are, oppression of the weak by the strong and of the poor by the rich prevented, hatred and strife between classes ended, a better distribution and better use of wealth attained, the ties of human brotherhood universally felt, and righteousness established in all the relations of life. And, therefore, they are not unwilling to be called Christian Socialists. But real Socialists they are not. They do not believe that all property should be either collective or common. They acknowledge the right of the individual to rule his own life, and not to be used or abused as the mere instrument of Society. They differ decidedly

[* And this is the opinion of Mr. Bax, who does not fail to pour contempt upon the work of Christian Socialists. See his " Religion of Socialism," and " Essays on Socialism, New and Old."]

from real Socialists as regards the signification of liberty, equality, and justice.

Those who first bore the name of Christian Socialists in England were Christians of a type as healthy, beautiful, and noble as God's grace working on English natures has produced. Maurice, Kingsley, Ludlow, Neale, and Hughes deserve to be lovingly and reverently remembered by many generations. The movement which they promoted was one in every respect admirable. And the name which they gave to it had at least the merit of expressing clearly why they so named it. This was because they held that Christianity and Socialism were in their very natures closely and amicably connected. It was because they believed that all social disease and disorganisation were caused by disobedience to the divine laws, that Christianity was as pre-eminently the power of God unto social as unto personal salvation; and that by Socialism ought properly to be meant the Christian view or doctrine of the life of society—just Christianity considered in its application to the purifying and perfecting of that life. Nothing less than Christianity, they felt, could overcome and expel the evils of the reigning industrial system, and bring about even such an economic organisation of any commonwealth as must be effected if God's kingdom is ever to be established in it; and equally they felt that so long as Christianity was unduly confined to churchly or ecclesiastical spheres of action, and did not go forth courageously to conquer the entire world to God, to imbue with the spirit, and subject to the law of Christ, trade and commerce and the whole of ordinary life—so long, in other words, as Christianity was separated from what they understood and wished others to understand by Socialism—it must be untrue to itself, unworthy of its origin, feeble and despised. Hence and thus it was that they conjoined Christianity and Socialism, and regarded "Christian Socialism" as the embodiment of "a new idea" which had entered into the world in the nineteenth century, and was as distinctive of it as that which gave rise to Protestantism had been of the sixteenth century. In the sixteenth century Christianity required to take the form of Protestantism; in the present century it ought to manifest itself as Socialism.*

* See the introductory paper to the "Christian Socialists," the organ of the school, by J. M. Ludlow.

To the so-called " Christian Socialism " of Maurice and Kingsley in itself we are far from objecting; but we cannot admit that " Christian Socialism " was a proper name for it, and hence cannot see in the existence of the movement which was thus designated any reason for thinking Christianity and Socialism to be naturally and harmoniously allied. Canon Vaughan has said: " The ' Christian Socialism ' (as it was styled) with which the honoured names of Maurice and Kingsley were identified forty years ago, and the much more recent movement of the Catholic and Protestant Churches of Germany in a similar direction—these are enough of themselves to prove that Socialism, rightly understood, has no necessary connection with religion and unbelief."* But where is the proof? The " Christian Socialism " of Maurice and Kingsley supplies none unless it was not merely so styled, but truly so styled, really Socialism, Socialism rightly understood. And that is what it certainly was not. Maurice and Kingsley did not teach a single principle or doctrine peculiar to Socialism.† The portion of the teaching of the French Socialists which they inculcated with such intense conviction and great effectiveness was the purely Christian, not the distinctly Socialistic portion. In condemning selfishness, in inveighing against the abuses of competition, in urging recourse to co-operative association, and in preaching justice, love, and brotherhood, they followed a good example which these Socialists had set them, without committing themselves to the acceptance of any specifically socialistic tenet. When they maintained that social reorganisation must be preceded by individual reformation, that trust in State aid or legislation was a superstition, that self-help was the prime requisite for the amelioration of the condition of the working classes, that co-operation should be voluntary and accompanied by appropriate education, that so far from private property being robbery it was a divine stewardship, and that men could never be joined in true brotherhood by mere plans to give them self-interest in common, but must first feel that they had one common Father, they struck at the very roots of Socialism.

The combination of Socialism with Religion even in the form of Christianity is certainly not impossible. It has actually taken

* " Questions of the Day," pp. 251-2.

[† Neale, moreover, objected to the title of " Christian Socialist."]

place. There are unquestionably so-called "Christian Socialists" who are at once sincere Christians and genuine Socialists. Those who profess themselves to be Christian Socialists are apt to be led by the motives which induced them to do so, and even by their very profession itself, far beyond such so-called "Christian Socialism" as that of Maurice and Kingsley. Some of the Christian Socialists at present in England display none of the jealousy of State interference with individual rights, or of the respect for the institution of private property, shown by those whose successors they claim to be. Witness the Rev. Stewart Headlam. There can be no doubt that he has managed to combine in his mind and doctrine Christianity and Socialism. This, however, is no proof that they are naturally connected. The mind of man can make the most unnatural and irrational combinations. The actual conjunction of belief in thorough-going Socialism with faith in Christianity is, consequently, no proof that they are naturally connected, or rationally and harmoniously related. Mr. Headlam believes in a Socialism which aims at robbery on a gigantic scale, and in a Religion which forbids all dishonesty. What does that prove? That Socialism and Christianity are closely akin? No. Only that Mr. Headlam, like all other men, may regard incompatible things as consistent.*

In Germany both the so-called "Catholic Socialists" and the so-called "Protestant" or "Evangelical Christian Socialists" made from the first excessive concessions to Socialism. Such representatives of the former as Bishop von Ketteler, Canons Moufang and Haffner, and Abbot Hitze, and such representatives of the latter as Dr. Stöcker and Todt were at one in inviting the State to intervene for the protection and aid of the working classes to an extent which could hardly fail to introduce a very real Socialism. The Protestant and Catholic Socialists of Germany have been charged with seeking to outbid each other; they have obviously been influenced by the desire to counteract the prevalent revolutionary and anti-religious Socialism. They agree in encouraging the State to extend and increase its already exorbitant power and activity. The leading Catholic Socialists of Austria

[* For a clear and concise view of the position taken up by the Rev. Stewart Headlam, see "The Church and Socialism," an excellent little pamphlet published by "The Church Family Newspaper." The whole book will prove a valuable addition to the present chapter.]

(Baron von Vogelsang, Count von Küfstein, Fathers Weiss and Costa-Rossetti), demand from the State such an organisation of industry and such regulation of the relations of capital and labour, as would leave little room for individual liberty or enterprise. Certain French Catholic writers have recently been advocating the same policy.

These movements show that both Catholic and Protestant Christians may lapse into socialistic aberrations, but not that they can do so without declension from Catholic and Protestant doctrine.

As to Catholic doctrine, that has been set forth in its relation to the labour and social question with an authority which no Catholic will dispute, and an ability and thoughtfulness which all must acknowledge, by the late Pontiff, Leo XIII, in a great historical document, the Encyclical "Rerum Novarum." There Socialism as a solution of the social question is tested by the standard of Catholic doctrine, and judged accordingly. The judgment pronounced on it is one which leaves no room for a Catholic becoming, without the most manifest inconsistency, a Socialist in the proper sense of the term. It is an express condemnation of the absorption of the individual or the family by the State, of the communisation of property, and of the equalisation of conditions, which are the distinctive characteristics of Socialism, an express condemnation of Socialism in itself as uncatholic and unchristian. In his Encyclical the Pope recognises no such distinction as that of a true and a false Socialism, but treats all that is truly Socialism as false.*

The Protestant view regarding the labour and social question

* Objections may, I think, be legitimately taken to the affirmation in the Encyclical of the right of the labourer to a minimum wage. Its chief defect, perhaps, is want of explicitness. Does it mean that the employer of labour is bound to pay to those whom he employs wages which, although not more than necessary to their reasonable and frugal comfort, are yet more than he can pay without producing at a loss? I do not suppose that the Pope intended to affirm this; but he was so understood, and in consequence claimed or blamed as a Socialist. For the allegation that he sanctioned the theory that wages ought to be determined by wants I can perceive no grounds.

It may here be added that the social question as related to Christianity on the one hand and to Socialism on the other, has been judiciously and ably treated by some of the Catholic clergy, and especially by some of the Jesuit fathers—*e.g.*, V. Cathrein, A. Lehmkuhl, Th. Meyer, etc. See Die Sociale Frage, beleuchtet durch "die Stimmen aus Maria-Laach." The widely-known work of Dr. Ratzinger, "Die Volkswirthschaft in ihren sittlichen Grundlagen," 1881, is eloquent and interesting, but not infrequently unguarded and extreme. See also the current Catholic press.

is almost identical with that so skilfully presented by the Pope as Catholic, and can only cease to be so by ceasing to be Christian. Catholics and Protestants hold as Christians a common deposit of truth absolutely essential to the welfare of society and of the labouring classes; and they can neither consistently nor wisely surrender a coin of it for one which has come from the mint of Socialism.

Christianity and Socialism, then, are not so related as those who are styled Christian Socialists imagine. What is called Christian Socialism will always be found to be either unchristian in so far as it is socialistic, or unsocialistic in so far as it is truly and fully Christian.

4. The relation of Socialism and Religion has likewise been represented as naturally one of antagonism.

This is the view most prevalent even among Socialists themselves. It is the view generally, and indeed almost exclusively, accepted by Social Democrats. The doctrine of Social Democracy is based on a materialistic conception of the world. Its advocates assail belief in God and immortality as not only in itself superstition but as a chief obstacle to the reception of their teaching and the triumph of their cause.

This view is regarded, of course, by religious Socialists as a serious error. They deplore it as a misfortune that Socialism should have been conjoined with a philosophical hypothesis which inevitably brings it into conflict with religion. They deny that there is any necessary or logical connection between the economic and the atheistic teaching of the Social Democrats; and affirm that a true Socialist ought in consistency to be a religious or even a Christian man.

Nor in so judging are they wholly mistaken. Socialism in every form, that of Social Democracy included, contains principles which can only be fully developed in an atmosphere of Religion. Its best features in all its forms are of Christian derivation and can only attain perfection as traits of Christian character. Socialism is not essentially or necessarily atheistic. It is not the compulsion of mere logic which has constrained Social Democrats to commit themselves to the advocacy of Materialism. Historical and practical considerations, the social circumstances under which their scheme of Collectivism originated and took shape, and the services

which Materialism seemed adapted to render in propagating it were doubtless those which had most influence in leading them to do so.

Nevertheless the union of Socialism with Materialism must be acknowledged to be a very natural one. Were it not so it would not be the common fact it is. Had Socialists not had some strong reasons for resting their economic proposals on materialistic presuppositions they would not have done this, as they could not fail to be aware that they must thereby evoke the opposition of the whole Christian world. They must have deemed the creed of Materialism so especially favourable to the success of their Socialism as to justify the risks and disadvantages to their cause obviously inseparable from allying it to an atheistical philosophy.*

Were they mistaken in thinking thus? I believe that they were not. But for the prevalence of materialistic views and tendencies Socialism would assuredly not have spread as it has done. It is only when the truth of the materialistic theory is assumed that the socialistic conception of earthly welfare, or social happiness, as being the chief end of human life, is likely to appear to be reasonable. If there is no other life for men than that which they live in the flesh, then, but only then, is it natural to conclude that their sole concern should be to get while on earth all the happiness which they can. A philosophy which maintains the existence of God, the supremacy of a Divine moral law, the reality of an unending life, plainly cannot forward the designs of those who aim at the entire subjection of the individual to society so consistently or effectively as one which affirms that there is nothing supramaterial, nothing higher than man himself, no life beyond the grave, no absolute good. The adherents of Social Democracy have not erred in thinking that Religion with its hopes and fears, Theology with its doctrines of the invisible and eternal, and Spiritual Philosophy with its theses based on speculative and moral reasons, are serious obstacles to the realisation of their plans. That they will

[* The Continental Socialists have always been as bitterly opposed to Christianity as English Socialists such as Mr. Belfort Bax. Marx and Engels were Materialists through and through, and there is no doubt that they have been responsible for much of the widespread infidelity amongst the working classes. Reference may be made for further information upon this point to such works as the late Professor Menger's "Volkspolitik," and Professor Enrico Ferri's "Socialism and Positive Science."]

come to dissociate their Socialism from Atheism and Materialism is, in my opinion, extremely improbable. For, although they would thereby disarm the hostility of many who are at present necessarily their opponents, they would also immensely decrease the number of those who would care for, or could believe in, their Socialism. It is only on those who are without religious faith that socialistic schemes exert a strong attractive and motive force. The most completely socialistic schemes are those which are freest from the contact and constraint of religion.*

* The following extract from a paper of the Right Rev. Abbot Snow, O.S.B., may partly confirm and partly supplement the preceding observations, and also be of interest as showing the relation of Socialism to Religion as viewed by a thoughtful Catholic writer: "To a Catholic his faith and his religion are paramount; for them he will sacrifice goods and life if necessary, placing his eternal welfare above temporal prosperity. Until he ascertains the position of his faith and religion in the new society proposed by Socialism, a Catholic will instinctively be suspicious of the absence of religion in the advocacy of social schemes, and anticipate danger to his faith. So that whether Socialists are loudly hostile to religion, or whether they passively suppose that religion and belief in God will pass away, or whether they simply ignore religion, a Catholic can scarcely associate with them in their schemes without having his faith undermined to a greater or less extent. The danger may be the better understood by explaining the tendency of Socialism to ally itself with theism and religion. These points may be briefly noticed. In order to reconstruct society on a socialistic basis the accumulation of power and wealth and land, now in the hands of a comparative few, must be sequestered and secured for the common good. Precautions must also be taken to prevent the recurrence of the irregularity. The condition of the masses must be raised, poverty and want must disappear, labour must be regulated, the general welfare must be adjusted so as to secure happiness and content to all. To attain this involves certain theories or principles to justify the revolution. The present notions of rights, duties, and justice require modification. The end and object being the general good of all men and to secure equal rights and position to all, the leading idea in socialistic theories is mankind taken collectively, the human race in general, or, as they call it, the solidarity of humanity. Whatever tends to the good of mankind generally is good and right; whatever tends to the advantage of the individual at the expense of the community is evil and wrong. Each one is bound to labour for the community and not for his own aggrandisement, and his goodness or badness depends on the fulfilment of that duty. The highest aim of all good men should be to increase the temporal prosperity and happiness of all collectively. Thus the whole range of thought and effort is limited to material prosperity in this life. In this state of things it is evident that religion and the next world would create a difficulty. It is difficult to fit God and His worship into such a scheme. Religion presents a future life more noble and lasting than the present, having its own rewards and punishments awarded to conduct in this life, and not dependent merely on the service of humanity but on the service of God. Any act is good or bad according as it pleases God, and not simply as it tends to the general good of men collectively. Again, religion aims primarily at individual sanctification for happiness in the next life, and only secondarily for the material prosperity of all in this. Now, religion and the worship of God is a standing fact, and the Socialist in dealing with it, seeing that it is opposed fundamentally to his aspirations

We have come, then, to the following conclusions as to the relation of Socialism to Religion. It is not a merely casual relation, a merely possible or accidental connection. Socialism, in seeking a satisfactory organisation of society, aims at what can only be accomplished with the aid of Religion, and when full justice is done to it. If it misconceives the nature of Religion, takes up a false attitude towards it, or fails to assign due importance to it as a social force, it must necessarily be a defective and false theory of society.

The forms both of Socialism and of Religion, however, are many, and so we cannot affirm in a general way much more than that what is true in the one cannot be brought into agreement with what is false in the other.

The relation between them is not one of identity. They are two and distinct. Each is only itself. Those who would identify them try to do so by sacrificing one of them to the other. The Socialists who profess to do so while retaining the name of Religion reject the reality which it denotes. Their view is essentially the same as that of the Socialists who maintain that Socialism is inherently and necessarily antagonistic to Religion.

Nor is the relation between Socialism and Religion essentially one of harmony. Those who imagine that it is are for the most part not really Socialists, but mean by Socialism merely sociability, philanthropy, co-operation, and the like, and by Christian Socialism

for humanity, either denies and seeks to abolish it or he strives to make religion consist in the service of humanity, and both alternatives necessarily tend to atheism, and hence the alliance. Furthermore, Socialism wages war against all class distinctions, and especially against the governing class. In the socialistic state the government must be by the people for the people. No power or pre-eminence can be held that is not entirely under the control of the people. Hereditary rank, class privileges, individual rights, will disappear. All authority and power must be derived from the people, be exercised in their name, and be terminable at their will. In such a state what place is there for ecclesiastical authority? Religion supposes an authority derived from God to regulate a system for the worship of God. The Catholic Church has a hierarchy of officials—pope, bishops, and clergy—with authority to command the obedience of the people independent of the State. These officials cannot rule at the will of the State, nor can their authority be derived from it. Hence sacerdotalism becomes one of the bugbears of Socialism. Unable to arrange their ideal State to include an independent ecclesiastical authority, Socialists are led to abolish religion in order to get rid of its ministers. They are of the governing class, and let them disappear with the rest. Thus the process of general levelling and the abolition of independent authority leads to the negation of religion and formal worship of God, and makes Socialism tend to atheism."—*The Catholic Times*, August 10, 1894.

"Social Christianity," "Christian Social ethics," or Christianity applied to the improvement and guidance of the life and conduct of society. The genuine Socialists among them are hazy or mistaken in their notions of the nature of Christianity.

The view that Socialism and Religion are naturally antagonistic is substantially correct. The antagonism, indeed, is not direct or inevitable. There is not an immediate or logically necessary connection between Socialism and Atheism or Materialism. A Socialist may be a religious man, or even a zealous Catholic or a Protestant. But a connection which is not direct and necessary may be indirect and natural. And such is the case here. Were it otherwise the actual relations between Socialism and Religion would not be what they are. The almost universal hostility of Socialism to Religion is not explicable by merely historical causes, although the influence of these need not be denied. It also implies that the ideal of human life which Religion brings with it is irreconcilable with that which Socialism presents. In holding that Socialism and Religion have principles and tendencies which naturally bring them into conflict we are at one with the vast majority of Socialists themselves.

We need not treat further of the relation of Socialism to Religion in general. It is of much more importance to consider how Socialism and Christianity bear on each other. For the vast majority both of Socialists and of Anti-Socialists Religion means practically Christianity. It is only in that form that they know it or feel any interest in it. Christianity is the only Religion which confronts Socialism as a formidable rival and foe. It is the only Religion which Socialists feel it necessary steadily and zealously to combat.

All modern Socialism has grown up within Christendom,* and is the product of causes which have operated there. With comparatively few exceptions its adherents may be reckoned among "the lapsed masses" of Christendom. The same influences which have diminished the membership of the Christian Church have filled the ranks of Socialism. The causes which are now strengthening Socialism at the expense of Christianity are, for the most part, those which had previously produced large bodies of Atheists, Secularists, Political Radicals, and Revolutionists.

[* Recently, however, Socialism has taken root in Japan.]

These causes are numerous and of various kinds—speculative and historical, scientific, moral, political, ecclesiastical, and industrial. I shall make no attempt to treat of them here; to do so even in the most summary manner would require a special chapter. The Church, however, may well seriously inquire what they are, and how she should act with regard to them. Had she adjusted her conduct better in relation to them, had she discriminated more truly between the good and the evil, the essential and the accidental, in them, had she read with clearer insight the signs of the times and listened more readily and reverently to the words of God in the events of history, had she been more filled with the spirit and more obedient to the precepts of her Founder and Lord, fuller of life, of light, and of love, and more faithful and earnest in the discharge of her social mission, she would not have had to lament that so many had left her and gone over to the enemy. The first and chief work which the Church of Christ has to accomplish in dealing with Socialists is to bring them back to the Christian fold from which they have wandered away beyond the sound of her voice. Her main difficulty with them, perhaps, is to get them to listen to her. They are at her doors, yet to all practical intents are more inaccessible to her than the Chinese or Hindus.

Catholic writers have often attempted to throw the blame of this state of matters on Protestantism, arguing that the revolt in the sixteenth century against authority in the Church weakened it also in the world, and has continued to exercise on society a dissolving and corrupting power, of which Socialism is the natural outcome.* This is surely an insufficient explanation. Protestantism was not an assault on authority, but essentially an appeal to authority, true and divine authority, that authority a recognition of which is the only and the adequate defence against both the despotic and the revolutionary tendencies of Socialism. Besides, Socialism springs even more from the abuse of authority than from illegitimate resistance to it. Catholicism tends more to Socialism and less to Individualism than Protestantism. Socialism preceded as well as accompanied the Reformation. In countries where Protestantism took firm root Socialism has been late in appearing,

* For a full statement of the argument referred to see the treatise of M. Auguste Nicolas, "Du Protestantisme et de toutes les hérésies dans leur rapport avec le Socialisme." Bruxelles. 1852.

and now that it has appeared in them it is very far from confined to them. Italy, Spain, France, Belgium, and Austria are not Protestant countries, and yet a very virulent sort of Socialism is at work in them.

The Reformation, I admit, was not an unmixed good. Protestantism has shown, and is everywhere showing, tendencies to disruption and dissolution which bode ill for the success of its endeavours to leaven society with the Gospel, even in the countries where it is most dominant. So long as it is content to remain broken up as at present into competing and conflicting denominations, it cannot possibly discharge effectively the duties to society, and especially to the poorer classes of society, which are incumbent on the Christian Church. The unity of spirit and of organisation which characterises the Catholic Church ought to be of immense advantage to her in the work of bringing Christianity to bear on the amelioration of social life. But she has defects which more than counteract these advantages, and which make her certainly not less responsible than the Protestant Church for the rise and spread of Socialism. Neither Church should attempt to exonerate herself by throwing blame on the other. Each should rather seek to find wherein she has been herself at fault, and how she may best amend herself. Both should be willing to co-operate as far as they can in measures which tend to the safety and the welfare of society. It is alike the duty and the interest of both to endeavour to remove the evils to which Socialism mainly owes its strength. It is foolish for either to pretend that she alone has the right to combat or the power to conquer these evils.

Some socialistic enthusiasts in the earlier half of the last century represented Socialism as the very Gospel which Christ had promulgated. In their view Christ had been merely a social reformer; and Christianity, as taught by Him, had consisted exclusively of a few simple practical truths, designed and adapted to be the seeds of a fruitful harvest of social welfare throughout the future of the human race; while all in it, as it has come down to us, which refers to the direct personal relationship of the soul to its God, to sin and redemption, to a divine life and an eternal world, had not entered into the thought of Christ, but had been added by popular superstition and priestly invention, and ought to be swept away.

This is not a view which will bear examination. It has no

historical basis. There is not a particle of evidence for the existence of the socialistic Christ. The Christ of history was the Christ who taught that God was to be regarded before man, that the soul was more than the body, that eternal and spiritual wants were more urgent than temporal and social ones. He came to set men right towards God, and said comparatively little about their relations to Cæsar and society, being aware that the man whose heart is right towards God will be right also towards every creature and ordinance of God. He died on the cross as the author of an eternal salvation, and not as the promulgator of a political panacea. The truths which He taught with reference to man's direct personal relationship to God, those so rashly pronounced to be the products of craft and credulity, have an infinite value, independent of any bearing which they may have on the life that now is. At the same time it is especially in these truths that even the moral and social power of the Gospel is concentrated—its power to quicken and leaven, to pervade and transform, to bless and beautify every phase of human nature here below.

Christianity is not dependent on any form of social polity or organisation. This is one marked feature of distinction between it and the economy which preceded it. That economy comprehended a political constitution for the Jewish nation as well as a Religion. The inseparable interweaving of the sacred with the civil, if indeed we can speak of the civil in such a case, constituted the Theocracy. The Gospel has come free from all the restrictions which made the Mosaic dispensation fit only for a single people at a particular stage of civilisation, and acted upon by special influences. It was meant to sanctify man's life in every form that life can assume, to pervade law and government through all their changes and stages with its own spirit, to make all the kingdoms of this world provinces of the kingdom of Christ, and in order to effect this it has necessarily not been committed to any one political system nor to any one type of social organisation. In order to influence for good every kind of polity it is indissolubly bound to none. It stands above them all, unfettered and independent, in order that it may be able to aid and strengthen them all, and free to reprove and correct them all.

Christianity is no more inseparably bound to the existing order of society than it was to that of Imperial Rome or of Feudal Europe.

The existing order of society is perceptibly changing under our own eyes, and will undoubtedly give place to one very different. Christianity can accommodate itself to manifold and immense changes. It can accommodate itself to any merely economic and political changes, and has no reason or call to attack any economic or political system simply as economic or political. So far as Socialism confines itself to proposals of an exclusively economic and political character, Christianity has no direct concern with it. A Christian may, of course, criticise and disapprove of them; but it cannot be on Christian grounds; it must be merely on economic and political grounds. Whether land is to be owned by few or many, by every one or only by the State, whether industry is to be entirely under the direction of Government, or conducted by co-operative associations, or left to private enterprise, whether labour is to be remunerated by wages or out of profits, whether wealth is to be equally or unequally distributed, are not in themselves questions of moment to the Christian life, or indeed questions to which Christianity has any answer to give.

Socialism and Christianity, however, are by no means entirely unrelated. Nor is their relationship merely antagonism. Socialism is of its very nature, indeed, erroneous and of evil tendency, seeing that one-sidedness and exaggeration are precisely what is distinctive of it; and it does not contain any truth or any good principle which is exclusively its own. But it is not, therefore, to be thought of as without any truth or good in it; nor as to be utterly condemned and opposed. There is much in it which is not distinctive of it nor exclusively characteristic of it. It is to a large extent an exaggeration or misapplication of principles which are true and good, which Christ has taught and sanctioned, which the Gospel rests on and must stand or fall by; and Christians will betray Christ and the Gospel if they desert these principles, or depreciate them, or allow them to be evil spoken of, or act as if they were ashamed of them, because Socialism has so far recognised and adopted them.

Let us take note of some of the features of Socialism which cannot fail to receive the approval of every intelligent Christian.

1. In all its forms it is the manifestation of desire to know the laws of social life and the conditions of social welfare. Even the most fantastic of its systems testify on the part of those who originated

them and of those who accepted them to the operation of a belief that the social world is, like the physical world, a world of law and order, a world to be studied in the spirit and by the methods of science, a world which science will eventually conquer and possess. This grand conviction is of comparatively recent origin, and, indeed, has only come to be universally entertained in recent years. Socialistic theories were among the early expressions of its prevalence, and it has to a considerable extent propagated itself by means of them. They may be regarded as preludes to a true Sociology or Social Science. The Social Science not of the present only but of the future also must be ascribed in some measure to Socialism, either as consequence or counteraction. And so far as this has been the case the Christian must see good in it. Christianity has the greatest interest in God's laws being brought to light in every region of His dominions. It is even more, perhaps, to be desired on its behalf that the laws by which God governs humanity should be known than that those by which He rules the physical creation should be known. So far as socialistic theories are the results of honest efforts to throw light on the constitution and order of the social world, Christianity, which is of the light and favours every effort to increase light, will not refuse to welcome them.

2. Socialism has assailed the competency of the older Political Economy to guide and govern society. Political Economy was gradually raised by the labours of a series of eminent men, of whom Adam Smith is the most famed, from a rudimentary and confused condition to the rank of a science rich in important truths as to labour, capital, wages, rents, prices, interest, population, etc. These men were keenly alive to the enormous evils which had resulted from the guardianship exercised by the State over industry and commerce, from the privileges granted to guilds, and corporations, and classes, from legal restrictions on activity and enterprise; and they deemed it the prime duty of the State to cease from interference, to remove old restrictions, and to leave individuals alone so long as they do not defraud or injure others. They maintained that Governments should let labour and capital develop themselves freely within the limits of morality, in the confidence that, as a general rule, each man knows best how to manage his own affairs, and that if individuals are left to seek, as they please,

without violence or injustice, their own advantage, the self-interest of each will tend, on the whole, to the common good. They did not pretend that economic truths were alone necessary to the welfare of mankind, nor that Political Economy was the only social science, nor that *laisser faire* was a rule without exceptions. Unfortunately, however, many who professed to apply their teaching to practice acted as if that had been the sum of it. They talked and behaved as if the heaping up of wealth was the one thing needful for society, and as if it was a crime to put almost any restraint on the process. Under the plea of industrial freedom they claimed social licence, rights of oppression, fraud, and falsehood. For the nefarious deeds to which their ruthless greed prompted them they sought exculpation from the reproaches of their consciences in the plea that the pursuit of self-advantage could not fail to promote the benefit of the community.

Socialists have striven in vain to refute the leading doctrines of Political Economists, and to prove that compulsory regulation of labour should be substituted for free contract. They have signally failed in their attacks on Political Economy as expounded by its scientific cultivators. But they have not been without success in discrediting the views and conduct of those who appealed to it with a view to justify evil practices in the maintenance of which they were interested. They have been able to show that there is no warrant for believing in the sufficiency of the operation of merely economic laws to produce social welfare, in universal selfishness tending to universal prosperity, in competition producing only good. Thus far they have had truth and historical experience on their side. And thus far their teaching has been in conformity with Christianity, which tells us that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that cometh from the mouth of God; which leads us to see that no one class of nature's laws is sufficient for man's guidance, and that even all nature's laws are very insufficient, where human virtue and divine grace are wanting; that selfishness, unresisted and uncorrected, must lead not to national prosperity, but to national ruin; and that all the wisdom which rulers can exercise and all the charity which Christians can display, will be fully required to control its action and to counteract its effects.

3. Socialism has helped to emphasise and diffuse the truth that

the entire economic life of society should be conformed to justice. If we ask its adherents what they mean by justice, we shall generally find that it is what other men would consider injustice. But they have had at least the merit of insisting on the supremacy due to considerations of justice in the regulation of the collective life of society as well as of the personal life of the individual. They must be credited also with the further and closely related merit of having searchingly diagnosed the moral diseases of society as at present constituted, of having persistently dwelt on and boldly denounced its sins and shortcomings, and of having thereby contributed to rouse, to widen, and to deepen in the public mind a consciousness that all is far from being wholly well in contemporary Christendom, and that our so-called Christian England, for example, is still chargeable in many respects with the violation of justice and the non-fulfilment of duty. But so far as they have done and are doing this they have so far done and are doing what the Hebrew prophets laboured to do in Ancient Israel, and must be regarded as unintentionally co-operating in the performance of a duty which is imperative on the members, and especially on the spokesmen, of the Christian Church.

4. Socialism is to a considerable extent an expression of the idea of fraternity, an embodiment of belief in the brotherhood of man. It proclaims the principle of human solidarity, that men are members one of another, and that the aim of each of them should be to seek not merely their own good, but also the good of others, and of the whole to which they belong. It owes its existence largely, and almost all that is best in it, to the spirit of sympathy with those who are in poor circumstances and humble situations, to solicitude for the welfare of the great mass of the people. It insists most emphatically on the claims of labour, and on the urgency of striving to ameliorate the condition of the class the most numerous and indigent. But there is thus far nothing in Socialism which is not derived from Christianity. The purest and most perfect love to man, the love to man which is conjoined with and vivified by love to God, was fully revealed by Jesus Christ. The law of His kingdom is the royal law of love. Men cannot be true Christians unless they feel and act towards each other as the children of the one Heavenly Father, loving even their enemies, seeking to do good to all whom it is in their power to

benefit, and showing themselves in all human relationships not merely faithful and just, but also self-denying, merciful, and charitable. Christianity has sanctified poverty and dignified toil as no other system or agency has done. Anti-Christian societies have as yet done so exceedingly little in comparison with the Church to console and help the poor, that they can make no reasonable claim to be more in sympathy with them or more anxious for their welfare.

5. The lively sense of the evils arising from competition and the strong desire generally evinced by Socialists to substitute co-operation for it are, it may be added, entirely in harmony with the spirit of Christianity. Socialists err, indeed, when they represent competition as something in itself unchristian; and when they propose to suppress it by compulsory collective association they recommend a slavery inconsistent with the freedom and responsibility implied in Christian liberty. To do away with competition in the various departments of industrial, commercial, and professional life would be to inflict a serious injury on society; and it can only be done away with by universal compulsion, by an entire subjection of individual wills to social authority, wholly at variance with a Christian conception of the nature, dignity, and duty of man. Yet Socialists have often ample reason for representing competition as anarchical and excessive, as hatefully selfish and productive of the most grievous wrongs; and they are irrefutable so long as they are content merely to maintain the desirability of reducing it to order, keeping it within moral limits, and restraining and counteracting the evils of it. Co-operation, moreover, even of a free or non-socialistic kind, although incapable of suppressing competition, may thus organise it, modify its character for the better, and lessen its abuses. And so far as it does this, Christian men cannot fail to welcome it as a practical manifestation of the love and brotherhood which their religion demands, as a confirmation through action of faith in the truth that Christian society as well as the Christian Church ought to be a body which God has so "tempered together that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another, and whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it, or whether one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it."

I have now indicated some respects in which Christianity and Socialism must be regarded as in the main agreed, and must proceed to refer to some respects in which they may be regarded as on the whole opposed. The reference will be of the briefest kind, as most of the points have already been more or less under consideration in other relations.

First, then, Socialism is antagonistic to Christianity in so far as it rests on, or allies itself with Atheism or Materialism. It does so to a very large extent. The only formidably powerful species of Socialism is that which claims to be scientific on the assumption that modern science has proved the truth of the materialistic view of the universe and of history, and shown Christian and all other religious conceptions and beliefs to be delusions. Manifestly, however, to the extent that Socialism thus identifies itself with an anti-religious Materialism, it comes into conflict with Christianity; and the struggle between them must be one of life and death. Christianity assumes the truth of faith in God, the Father Almighty, Creator and Ruler of heaven and earth, infinite in power, wisdom, righteousness, and love; and although it does not despise matter, or depreciate any of its beauties, excellences, or uses, it certainly treats it as merely the work and manifestation of God, and as meant to be instrumental and subordinate to the requirements of spiritual and immortal beings.

Secondly, Socialism is antagonistic to Christianity, inasmuch as it assumes that man's chief end is merely a happy social life on earth. The assumption is a natural one in a system which regards matter as primary in existence, and human nature as essentially physical and animal. This almost all Socialism does. Even when it does not expressly deny the fundamental convictions on which Christianity rests it ignores them. It leaves out of account God and Divine Law, sees in morality simply a means to general happiness, and recognises no properly spiritual and eternal life. It conceives of the whole duty of mankind as consisting in the pursuit and production of social enjoyment. Hence its ideal of the highest good, and consequently of human conduct, is essentially different from the Christian ideal. And thus it necessarily comes directly into conflict with Christianity.

Socialism owes much of its success to the very poorness of its ideal. Because superficial and unspiritual, that ideal is all the more

apt to captivate those in whom thought is in its infancy, and the spirit asleep. It is just the ideal of the common worldly man boldly put forth with the pretentious claim to be the ripe product of modern wisdom. To be as rich as one's neighbours, to have few hours of work and abundance of leisure and amusement, to have always plenty to eat and to drink, to have every sense, appetite, and affection gratified, to have no call or need to cultivate poverty of spirit, meekness, penitence, patience under affliction, equanimity under oppression, or to suffer from the hunger and thirst after righteousness, which no acquisition of rights will ever fill, has always been the ideal of many men, but never, perhaps, of so many as in the present day. And what else than this is the ideal of "a good time coming," of which Bebel and Stern, Bax and Bellamy, and so many other socialist writers have prophesied, and which so many so-called Christian Socialists even ignorantly identify with the coming of the kingdom of God on earth foretold by Christ? It is so little else that there is no wonder that those who are already wholly out of sympathy with the Christian ideal should gladly accept an ideal which is virtually just their own clearly and confidently expressed. The Gospel of Socialism has, it must be admitted, one great advantage over the Gospel of Christ. It needs no inner ear to hear it, no spiritual vision to discern it, no preparation of heart to receive it. Were it wholly realised, mere bodily sense and the most carnal mind could not only apprehend but comprehend it.

At the same time there is a considerable amount of truth in it. It exhibits the *summum bonum* as not merely individual but social; inculcates, although with questionable consistency, unselfishness and self-sacrifice; and assigns great importance to what is undoubtedly most desirable—a general betterment of the earthly lot of men.

Thirdly, Socialism comes into conflict with Christianity inasmuch as it attaches more importance to the condition of men than to their character, whereas Christianity lays the chief stress on character. Socialists are not at fault in maintaining that material conditions have a great influence on intellectual and moral development, and that there is a correspondence between the political, literary, and religious history of humanity and its economic history. Those who deny this reject a truth of great scientific and practical importance,

and one which has been amply established by Economists of the Historical School, by Positivists, and by Socialists. The Christian has no interest to serve by disputing it; on the contrary, it is his manifest interest to accept it to the full, and to recognise as obstacles to the realisation of Christianity not merely purely spiritual evils, but also such things as bad drainage, unwholesome food, inadequate ventilation, uncleanly and intemperate habits; and, in short, all that tends to degrade and destroy the bodies and through these the souls of men. Human life is a unity in which body and mind, the economic and the spiritual, the secular and the religious, are inseparable, and of which the whole is related to each part or phase, and each part or phase to the whole.

Where the Socialist errs is in conceiving of what is a relation of complex interdependence as one of simple dependence, in taking account only of the action of material and economic factors of social development on intellectual and spiritual conditions, and in ignoring the action of its intellectual and spiritual factors on material and economic conditions. The whole historical philosophy on which Social Democracy rests is vitiated by this one-sidedness and superficiality of treatment. It is a philosophy which explains history by one class of causes, the physical and industrial, and which assigns no properly causal value to intellectual faculties, to moral energies, to scientific and ethical ideas, and to religious convictions. But so to account for history is flagrantly to contradict history, which clearly testifies that its economic, intellectual, and spiritual development are, as Rossi says, "Although not unrelated yet not necessarily conjoined or uniformly connected." Their relationship is due to the fact that all history, economic, intellectual, and spiritual, is essentially the work of man himself, a being at once economic, intellectual, and spiritual. It is in the main not what any conditions or factors external to man make it, but what men make it; and its character depends on the character of the men who make it.

Where Socialism fails in its explanation of history is just where it also comes into conflict with Christianity. It overlooks or depreciates the importance of the inward and spiritual, while Christianity fully acknowledges it. "The kingdom of God," which was so largely the burden of Christ's preaching, and which the Christian believes that history is evolving, is a life which develops

from within. "The kingdom of God is within you." The healing of society, according to the Christian view, must come from God, must commence at the centre in the hearts of men, and work outwards. It is only through improvement of the lives of individuals that there can be a real and radical improvement of the constitution of society. Without personal renovation there can be no effective social reformation.

Fourthly, Socialism is antagonistic to Christianity in so far as it does injustice to the rights of individuality. There is no Socialism, properly so called, where the freedom to which individuals are entitled is not unduly sacrificed to the will of society. A Socialism like that of Social Democracy, which would refuse to men the right to possess private property or capital, which would give them no choice as to what work they are to do, nor as to the remuneration which they are to receive for their work, would manifestly destroy individual liberty. To pretend, as its advocates do, that it would establish and enlarge liberty is as absurd as to assert that things equal to the same thing are unequal to each other, or any immediate self-contradiction whatsoever. What such Socialism directly demands is slavery in the strictest and fullest sense of the term.

From all such slavery Christianity is meant to free men, yet without rendering them lawless or allowing them to disown any of their social obligations. By causing them to realise their direct personal responsibility to God for all their actions, and their infinite indebtedness to Christ, it makes it impossible for them to accept any merely human will, law, or authority as the absolute rule of their lives. The Christian is a man with whom "it is a very small thing that he should be judged of any man's judgment," seeing that "He that judgeth him is the Lord;" who feels that "each one of us shall give account of himself to God;" who acknowledges "but one Master, even Christ." Dependence on God implies and requires independence towards men. The service of Christ is true liberty. "If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." The liberty with which Christ makes His people free, spiritual liberty, is as inherently irreconcilable with the slavery which Collectivism would introduce as with the slavery in the classical world and the serfdom in the mediæval world which it has destroyed. All the religious reformations and political revolutions through which human freedom has been gained and

human rights secured have been but the natural sequences and continuations of the vast spiritual change in human life effected by Christ, immeasurably the greatest Reformer and Revolutionist who has ever appeared on earth. What Socialism unconsciously aims at as regards freedom, as regards the rights of individuality, is the reversal of His work in history—is the accomplishment of a vast anti-reformation or counter-revolution. Is it likely that an attempt so reactionary will succeed ? Is it desirable that it should ?

I might proceed to mention other respects in which genuine Socialism and genuine Christianity are more or less opposed. But it seems unnecessary to do so, especially as some of the most important of these respects have been virtually indicated in the preceding chapter, seeing that wherever Socialism contradicts moral truth it also contravenes Christian faith. And at several points Socialism is, as we have seen, at variance with true morality. At all such points it is also at variance with Christianity.

For Christianity is ethically all-comprehensive, as a religion which would " give to all men life and that always more abundantly " must be in order to attain its end. It seeks the fulfilment and honour of the whole moral law. It appropriates and transmutes into its own substance all true morality, but adds thereto nothing which is morally false or perverse. Its Ethics is perfect both in spirit and principles, although it has often been most imperfectly understood and applied, even by thoroughly sincere Christians, and although from its very perfection it can never be either perfectly apprehended or perfectly realised by beings so imperfect as men.

In the Ethics of Socialism there are no elements of transcendency, infinity, spirituality ; all is commonplace, definite, and easy of comprehension. Its inspiration must, therefore, be exhaustible, its power of raising man " above himself " comparatively small ; its successes indecisive and temporary. But it is further, as has been previously indicated, in many respects plainly false and of evil tendency. Christianity is free from all its faults. Nearly nineteen hundred years ago it was born into a world in which they were universally prevalent. From the first it avoided and condemned them. So far as the contents of socialistic Ethics are exclusively its own and contrary to the precepts or spirit of Christian Ethics, they are not new discoveries or virtues, but old pagan

delusions and vices which have sprung up where Christianity has ceased to exert its due influence.

There is nothing ethically valuable in Socialism which is not also contained in Christianity. All its moral truths are Christian truths. It is only praiseworthy when it insists on the significance and application of principles and precepts which have always been inculcated by Christianity. In other words, Christian Ethics is sufficient if Christians understand it aright and follow its guidance faithfully. As regards moral doctrine there is need of Socialism only when and where Christians are unintelligent or unfaithful. All that is morally good in Socialism, all that is elevating and generous in its aspirations, can find satisfaction in Christianity, and will even only find it there. Were it not so it might admit of doubt whether in so far as they come into conflict Christianity or Socialism will triumph. As it is so there can be no room for doubt on the subject. In virtue of all that is excellent in itself, Socialism must reconcile itself with Christianity, which has all that excellence, and more. Will it persist in assailing it merely on the strength of what is evil in itself? It may; but when a war comes to be reduced to one between good and evil, truth and error, only the veriest pessimist can entertain any doubt as to which cause will conquer and which will suffer defeat.

Christianity and Socialism are very differently related to Economics and Ethics. Christianity has spoken with authority on all moral principles: it has propounded no economic views. Socialism rests on and centres in economic hypotheses and proposals. Hence Christianity cannot come into direct conflict with Socialism in the sphere of Economics as it may in that of Ethics. It is concerned with the economic doctrines of Socialism only in so far as they bear an ethical character and involve ethical consequences. Unfortunately Socialism has put forth economic proposals tainted with injustice and likely to lead to social ruin. As to these doctrines it is only necessary to say that genuine Christianity stands wholly uncommitted to any of them. It cannot with the slightest plausibility be maintained to have taught the wrongfulness of private property or to have recommended the abolition of differences of wealth. It supplies no warrant for representing individual capital as essentially hostile to labour or for exhibiting the payment of labour by wages in an odious light. It suggests no wild or

fraudulent views regarding currency or credit. It encourages no one to confiscate the goods of his neighbour under cover of promoting his good. It is in its whole spirit opposed to the delusion that riches are in themselves an end, or an honour, or a blessing. It is not fairly chargeable with any socialistic aberration. It is wholly free from association with either economic or moral falsehood. This is a mighty advantage for Christianity even regarded merely as a social power. For society can only prosper permanently through conforming to truth. No error will in the end fail to injure it.

But of all truth, none is so capable of benefiting society as the truth in which Christianity itself consists. Were all men but sincerely convinced of the Fatherhood of God, of the love of Christ, of the helpfulness of the Holy Spirit, of the sacredness of the obligations of human brotherhood, of the unspeakable importance of the dispositions and virtues which the Gospel demands for the present as well as for the future life, society would soon be wondrously and gloriously transformed. As regards social as well as individual regeneration and salvation, Christ is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

II

THE Christian spirit is divine, but not disembodied. It has had appointed for it a body through which it has to operate on society somewhat as the individual soul does on the world through its corporeal organism. The Church is the body of Christ; in Him it is one and indivisible, alive and powerful; by Him it is quickened, enlightened, inspired, and ruled. It comprehends all those in whose life is His life, and who are the obedient organs of His will; all those who, however otherwise different and divided, are of "one heart and one soul" through having "the same mind which was in Christ." It exists to manifest the spirit, to apply the wisdom, and to continue the work of Christ, in order that the name of the Father may be universally hallowed, His kingdom fully established, and His will perfectly done even here on earth; and this it can only do through self-denial, self-sacrifice, and continually doing good, or, in a word, only in so far as it lives and works as Christ did.

The Church is not identical or co-extensive with the kingdom of God. It lies within the sphere of the kingdom which it has been specially instituted to establish and extend. The sphere of this

kingdom naturally embraces all human thought and life, every form of human existence and every kind of human activity, and not merely what is distinctly religious or ecclesiastical. It is rightfully inclusive of philosophy, science, art, literature, politics, industry, commerce, and all social intercourse. The kingdom of God can only have fully come when entire humanity is filled with the spirit, and obedient to the law, of Christ. And the Church, the whole body of believers, the vast host of Christian men and women in the world, has assigned to it the task of humbly and faithfully labouring to bring about the full coming of the kingdom of God.

The relation of the Church, in this its primary and chief acceptation, to what are called *social questions* is very obvious; but it is not on that account to be inattentively regarded. It is just the Church in this sense of the term which it is of supreme importance should be got to interest herself adequately and aright in these questions—the Church as consisting of not the clergy only, but of all who desire to live and work in the spirit of Christ. The power of the clergy to act beneficially on society, however unitedly and strenuously it may be exerted, cannot but be slight indeed compared with the power which the Church might exert. I believe that there is no social power in the world equal to that which the Church possesses, and that no social evil or anti-social force could long resist that power were it wisely and fully put forth. The Church can only do her duty towards society through all Christian men and women doing their duty towards it.

The social mission of the Church can only be accomplished by the Church as a whole—by the Church in its most comprehensive, and at the same time most distinctly Christian, acceptation. Nothing can be more incumbent on the clergy than to bear this constantly in mind, and continually to stir up the laity, who are just as apt to forget it, to a due sense of what their Church membership implies, or, in other words, what participation in the life and work of Christ implies, so that when the Church in its holy warfare against the evils in society moves into action it may always be with the consciousness that its every member is expected to do his duty.

It is chiefly by acting on and through the Church, and by exciting the Church to faithfulness in the fulfilment of its social mission, that the clergy can promote the good of society. The Church has a social mission. It is one which is included in its general mission

as the Church of Christ, one which it cannot neglect without unfaithfulness to Christ, one which it can only discharge by following the example, teaching the doctrine, and acting in the spirit of Christ. The mission of the Church is essentially the complement and continuation of that of Christ. It is to heal and to sanctify both individuals and society; not only to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus, but to transform humanity itself into a wholly new creature in Christ Jesus.

That the Church has such a mission is so plainly taught in the New Testament that it has been always more or less acknowledged both by profession and practice. The Church has in every generation felt in some measure the necessity of dealing with questions which were the social questions of that generation; in every age it has so far sought to adapt both its teaching and its action to the tendencies and wants of society in that age.

One often hears it said at the present time that the Church has hitherto dwelt too much on individual aspects of the Christian faith, and comparatively disregarded public life; that the claims of personal religion have been too exclusively insisted on and the claims of social religion too much forgotten. And certainly a considerable amount of evidence might easily be adduced in support of the statement. Yet it is very doubtful if it is really true as a general proposition. I believe that if we look closely at the history of the Church from its foundation to the present time we shall rather conclude that she has on the whole erred more in the contrary direction; and that she would have done more good both to individuals and to society if she had thrown herself with less absorbing ardour into the questions of the day. The questions which have most violently agitated the Church in the past have for the most part been, or at least have seemed at the time to be, questions vitally affecting the welfare or even the very existence of society.

The mission of the Church in relation to social questions is at present special only in so far as the social questions themselves are special. They are so obviously and to a large extent. Wherein? There can be little hesitation as to the answer. It is that they are now to an extent unknown in any other age *labour questions;* that they centre in and are dependent on what may be called in a general way *the labour question* far more than they have ever done before in the whole history of the world. This labour question itself, it is

true, is only a form of a question as old as history, the question of the unequal distribution of material goods among men, but it is a new and extraordinarily developed form of it, and it is influencing the life of the present generation far more widely, subtly, and powerfully than it influenced the life of other generations in other forms. How the question has come to be what it is, and to have acquired such significance as it has, only the history of industry and of the industrial classes during the last hundred years can adequately explain, and I cannot, of course, enter here upon so vast a subject as that. I shall, therefore, simply venture to express the opinion that for the clergymen of this country just now a study of the industrial history of Britain during the last hundred years will be found at least as instructive and useful as the study of any hundred years of its ecclesiastical history, and more so than the study of any hundred years of its history of which wars, or civil commotions, or political struggles were the most representative features.

That the labour question should be the chief question of the day is not to be regretted. What it means is not, as some would have us believe, that manual labourers were never so defrauded and oppressed as at present, but that they were never before so free, possessed of their rights to the same extent, so fully conscious of the value of the services which they render to society, so confident of their power to obtain what is due to them, so full of hope, aspiration, and ambition. And all this is well. Every improvement which has taken place in the condition of the labouring classes should be matter for rejoicing. It is not only their right but their duty to seek still further to better their lot. Every step which they take of such a kind as will really raise them to a higher level and happier state deserves only commendation and encouragement.

But it does not follow that there are no elements of evil in the present situation, or, in other words, in the circumstances and in the conditions of life which now give to the labour question its absorbing interest. On the contrary, it is obviously a situation full of tendencies towards division and strife, and even towards disorders and revolution; one in which many unreasonable claims are advanced, in which much of the vaulting ambition which overleaps itself and falls on the other side is prevalent, and in which dangerous passions are widely diffused. It is a situation in which

charlatans and fanatics, vain and violent and selfish men, misleaders, naturally find no difficulty in obtaining believers and followers, and in which " double-minded men, unstable in all their ways," are greatly multiplied, and very like indeed to " waves of the sea driven with the wind and tossed."

When a stream of social tendency flows strongly in any direction the Church is just as likely to go too far with it as not far enough. It is told of Leighton that when minister of Newbattle he was publicly reprimanded at a meeting of Synod for not " preaching up the times," and that, on asking who did so, and being answered, " All the brethren," he rejoined, " Then if all of you preach up the times, you may surely allow one poor brother to preach up Christ and eternity." Whether the story itself is true or not, it conveys a great truth. Preaching up Christ and eternity is needed in all times. No teaching which does not will much profit any time.

The sort of preaching to the times in which Leighton could not join passed away in Scotland and was succeeded by a very different style of preaching, which he would have disliked still more, inasmuch as it was still more occupied with time and still less with Christ and eternity. It aimed chiefly at being judicious and practical, at promoting refinement and enlightenment, good sense, good conduct, personal happiness, and social contentment; and, doubtless, it was not altogether unprofitable, but as certainly it failed on the whole even more than the excess from which it was a reaction.

It is perfectly possible still to err in the same way. It is even not unlikely, owing to the interest now so widely and keenly felt in social questions, that many of our clergymen may take to discoursing on them to an extent which will do far more harm than good. They may deem the discussion of such themes as Socialism, Landlordism, Law Reform, the Duration of the Labour Day, a Living Wage, the Wages System, and the like, the preaching which our times require. They may deal in their pulpit ministrations with such social and economic questions much in the same way as the rationalist preachers of Germany in the latter part of the eighteenth century dealt with moral and even agricultural questions. I trust, however, that they will receive more wisdom, and be guided to handle the Divine Word more faithfully.

The clergyman who feels a call to propound his views on social and industrial problems should find, as he easily may, an opportunity

of doing so simply as a citizen, claiming and using the freedom to which every citizen is entitled; he ought not, in my opinion, to do it as a minister of the Divine Word, and an accredited representative of the Church. The Gospel does not contain solutions of these problems. Those who pretend that it does make claims on its behalf, which can only tend to discredit it. It reveals, however, principles and spiritual motive forces which are essential to social welfare and to the right solution of social problems. And the preaching of the Gospel which will have the most powerful and beneficent influence on society will be that which brings these principles most clearly into the view of society and these forces most fully into action on it; the preaching which so exhibits the Gospel that it will shine full-orbed on all social relationships, and radiate from its own entire divine nature the light and heat, the vigour and fruitfulness, which the social world needs.

The preacher who lacks faith in such preaching, and whose ambition is not satisfied by it, shows an inadequate appreciation of the Gospel and of his own office; and when he betakes himself to the direct discussion of social problems, and thus thrusts himself into competition with the professional politician, the economic specialist, the newspaper editor, and others, whose experience and knowledge in relation to them are likely to be greater than his, he displays much unwisdom. He comes down from a position of advantage on which he is strong, and from which he can, without competing with any man, co-operate with all classes of men who are working towards the true amelioration of society, and takes his stand on lower and less solid ground, where all around him is contention, and where he is very apt to be weaker and less useful than other men. There must on the whole be loss in that. The power of the pulpit for good to society will certainly not be increased but decreased by ministers of the Gospel forsaking their own special work of preaching the Gospel for that of mere lectures on social themes, or of social agitators, or of politicians, or of journalists, of all of whom there is no scarcity in this country at the present time, and who are discussing social questions during six days of every week throughout the year as actively as there is any necessity for.

I do not say that the preacher may not treat of social questions at all. I fully admit that he may have good reason to refer to them

occasionally, or even frequently, and very plainly. What I hold is that he ought always in doing so to keep the great facts and truths of the Gospel bearing on them clearly in his own view and before the view of his hearers; that he should never follow applications so far that the Christian principles which underlie them are in danger of being lost sight of; and never forget that it is only in so far as things and questions can be looked at in relation to Christ, and through the medium of the light which shines from Christ, that he as a Christian preacher has any special call or right to deal with them.

Maurice and Kingsley set, I think, in this respect an admirable example. While perfectly faithful and fearless in rebuking the evils and indicating the requirements of their time, they anxiously sought to do so from the Christian standpoint; and even, we may say, from the very centre and heart of the Gospel. It seemed to them that the deepest and most distinctive truths of Christianity were so wonderfully adapted to the constitution of the human spirit and to the wants of human society that if properly presented they could not fail to receive from the evidence of that adaptness afforded by their effects a most powerful confirmation. They were convinced that faith in the Tri-unity of God, or in the Incarnation, could certify itself to be true by its power to redeem humanity and to sanctify life. They believed that all history was meant to be made a magnificent and conclusive apologetic of Christianity.

While the Christian minister ought to exercise prudence and self-restraint in the respect indicated, there is no phase or question of social life, or, indeed, of human life, on which he may not be warranted or even called to speak words of exhortation, commendation, or rebuke; none as to which it can reasonably be said that it lies wholly beyond the sphere within which he as the preacher of Gospel truth may rightly intervene. The principles of the Gospel are designed to pervade, to embrace, and to direct the whole life of man, and the minister of the Gospel is bound to endeavour to apply its principles to the whole of that life. If he would be loyal to Christ he must refuse to conform to any human authority or human prejudice which would assign a merely external conventional limit to the fulfilment of his duty, or to the freedom of his office; which would say to him, for example, "This is business, or this is politics, and therefore it is not within your

province." To all such dictation his reply should be: "My province is as wide as my Master's, and includes all things in so far as they are either moral or the reverse, either Christian or unchristian." He should recognise no arbitrary outward restraint. What he must not cast aside are simply the reasonable and internal restraints of the Christian spirit itself—those of Christian wisdom, justice, and love. Reverencing these, he will learn when to speak and when to be silent, how far to go and when to stop.

The Church ought to aim at fulfilling her social mission wholly in the spirit of her Lord and from a sincere, unselfish sense of duty to Him. She should acknowledge allegiance to Him alone, beware of every unholy alliance with the powers of the world, flatter no class of men, and allow no class of men to patronise her, or to use her for their own purposes. She should impartially and disinterestedly seek the good of all men, and deliver to all her God-given message with boldness and honesty, with simplicity and earnestness, with compassion and love.

Her duty in this respect, while very plain, is certainly far from easy. She has few, if any, entirely disinterested friends. All political parties aim more or less at making political capital out of either supporting or assailing her. Rich and poor, capitalists and labourers alike, so far as they have class interests, wish her to promote their own, and so far as they have prejudices will resent her disturbing them. She cannot realise too strongly that her strength is in the name of the Lord alone; and that truly to benefit any class of men, rich or poor, she must not be the Church of that or of any class alone, but the Church of the Living God, with whom there is no respect of persons, and who seeks the highest good of all men. It is especially desirable that the clergy should be fully imbued with this consciousness as they are especially called to win all men to the cause of Christ and to a comprehensive practical recognition of the obligations of duty. Obviously while they cannot succeed in this work without zeal, they cannot in many cases even attempt it without doing mischief if their zeal is of a partisan character. As regards labour difficulties especially, whether they are to do good or harm by even referring to them must depend chiefly on whether or not they do so with fairness, with full knowledge, and an obvious desire for the true good of all concerned.

A considerable number of working men are alienated from the

Church because they deem that her influence has been exerted on the side of the wealthier classes. They look upon her as an ally of capitalism; and they justify on this ground their neglect of religion. And it must be admitted that the Church has often shown a deference to rank and wealth altogether at variance with Christian principle. The worship of Mammon is too common in the house of God. The competitive and mercantile spirit of the age has entered to a deplorable extent into our ecclesiastical denominations. There are far too many congregations in our large cities drawn almost entirely from the capitalist class.

The Church should endeavour to remove such causes of disaffection. It is foolish of those who desire her welfare to try to increase or universalise competition and mercantilism within her borders instead of labouring to diminish and counteract them. The ministers of the Church should do their utmost to bring rich and poor together on the footing of Christian equality and brotherhood, and so to act towards them that no man can justly suspect that he is less esteemed than another merely because he is poorer. It is no part, however, of their duty to working men to spare any unworthy feeling or to confirm them in any error which they may entertain. It is no part of their duty to take the side of working men in any merely class struggle, nor in any struggle where they have not also clearly on their side reason, justice, and religion. It is, on the contrary, their duty to rise above all party prejudices, passions, and interests, and to speak to all parties *the truth in love*. They have to endeavour to bring home to workmen an adequate sense of the sacredness of the duties of labour, a conviction that the relations between employers and employed are moral on both sides, and a consciousness of their indebtedness to society as well as of the indebtedness of society to them. Our age is democratic. The ordinary run of politicians are sure, therefore, to flatter those whom they call the people. If clergymen do so also, enormous mischief will be done to the commonwealth and great injustice to divine truth.

It does not in any way follow from the foregoing remarks that the labouring and poorer classes of the community are to be regarded as having no special claims on the sympathy and help of the Church and of the clergy. They have such claims. Poverty and all the hardships and disadvantages of their lot of themselves constitute

claims which the Church and its ministers ought fully and practically to acknowledge. They ought to manifest towards the poor the same spirit of compassion and love which was conspicuous in Christ. They ought to favour all efforts wisely directed to relieve suffering, to diminish misery, and to make the lives of the struggling masses of mankind more hopeful, brighter, happier. They ought always to have the courage to protest against any social injustice or political iniquity perpetrated by the strong on the weak. The clergy are never more clearly in their proper places as citizens than when they are showing their interest in, and lending their aid to, measures which tend to elevate and improve the condition of working men. They ought never to be among those who thoughtlessly or selfishly tell us that "we have heard quite enough of the working man." Those who say so can surely have imbibed little of the spirit of Christ, or must know little of the hard and bitter lot of vast numbers of working men and working women.

There is, perhaps, less hostility to the Church among the rich than among the poor, but the friendship of the rich to the Church may be far from commendable in itself or complimentary to her. It is much to be feared that among the wealthier and more educated classes there are not a few who deem themselves so very superior to their fellow-mortals as to feel that they can themselves quite well dispense with the teaching and ordinances of the Church, but who believe that it is highly desirable for the sake of social order, for the protection of property, and for the comfort of those who are well provided with the means of enjoyment that her teaching should be accepted and her ordinances reverenced by what they call "the lower orders."

There can be no portion of mankind more destitute of religion, farther away from the kingdom of God, or in a more lapsed, more helpless, or more hopeless condition, than those who thus value the Church chiefly as a fellow-worker with the police force, and religion chiefly as a safeguard to their own self or class interests. The wildest Socialist who has enthusiasm for an unselfish ideal and is willing to sacrifice his own happiness or life for its realisation has in him far more that is akin to the spirit of Christ than such a patroniser of Christ's Gospel, such a friend of Christ's Church. But that does not release the Church from duty towards such a man. He too has a soul to be saved, and is all the more to be pitied

because it is as yet so utterly lost. Such a Dives is a far fitter object of compassion than any Lazarus.

Those who are rich in the world's goods must be taught that only those who are poor in spirit can belong to the kingdom of heaven. They need to realise the responsibilities, the duties, the temptations, and the dangers of wealth. They require to feel that they are not "their own," and that all that they possess is but a loan entrusted to them by their Master for the benefit of His great household. It is essential both to their spiritual welfare and to their social usefulness that they should have impressed on them the conviction that it is a question of life or death for them to decide whether they will serve God or Mammon. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." These are among the truths of which the Church has to remind the rich man. They are of a kind hard enough for him to learn without being made harder by uncharitable abuse of the rich simply as such. If he learns them, the richer he is the better will it be for society.

There can be no doubt that the Church should do more than she is at present doing for the solution of social and labour problems, in the sense that she ought to do her duty better, to present the Gospel with greater fulness and power, to push on her home-mission work with increased zeal, to give her sympathy and co-operation more heartily to all measures clearly tending to the economic and moral advancement of the community, to strive more earnestly to diffuse among all classes the spirit of Christian love and brotherhood, of righteousness and peace, and to exemplify in herself more perfectly the beauty of that spirit. As I have already indicated, however, it is not the office of the Church to furnish definite solutions of these problems. Hence her official representatives should be very cautious both as to the extent and as to the temper in which they intervene in disputes regarding them.

Especially is such caution necessary in regard to those deplorable conflicts between labour and capital which are so prominent a feature in the present age. Of course, if the clergy see any reasonable likelihood of being able to aid in bringing about a compromise between employers and employed which will either preserve or restore peace, either prevent or bring to a close a "strike," they would be neither good citizens nor consistent ministers of the

Gospel of peace if they did not gladly embrace the opportunity. But as a general rule they should be very chary of intervention, and particularly when once fighting has begun. They have no authority inherent in their office for laying down the law to either of the contending parties. It is often very difficult, or even impossible, for them, as for all other outsiders, to get at a sufficiently full and accurate knowledge of the facts in dispute. They run great risk of raising false hopes by their intervention, and thus of prolonging strife and misery, and in the end of deepening the disappointment of those who are defeated.

Neutrality, then, will be in most cases the only course open to them in the circumstances referred to. But it should be a neutrality which springs not from want of interest or sympathy but from Christian prudence and benevolence. And that it does so should be made manifest by the ministers of the Church both in their teaching and in their intercourse with their parishioners. They should make it their aim to get rich and poor, employers and employed, to meet together as much as possible on equal and friendly terms, as becomes brethren in Christ. They should do their best to get both classes to realise that while they have each their rights they have also each their duties, that money given and received is not the only tie between them, that they are connected by moral bonds, by spiritual relations, that employers should show all due esteem and a humane, generous, and Christian spirit towards those who are in their service and the employed all due consideration for the interest of their masters, and all due fidelity to the work which they have undertaken to do.

Then, the ministers of the Church might, I believe, make their intercourse with the working men under their pastoral care more interesting, instructive, and useful than it could otherwise be, were they themselves to make a careful study of the social and labour questions debated around them, and to master the leading principles of economic science as expounded by such truly scientific specialists as Sidgwick, Marshall, and Shield Nicholson. So prepared, they might even at times, in parishes where fit audiences could be found, spread a good deal of beneficial light and help to dispel some mischievous errors by week-day evening lectures on social or economic themes—lectures which might even easily be of an expository, not a controversial or polemic character.

The clergy might also, perhaps, exert a useful influence in the way of encouraging workmen to help themselves. Self-help is the most effectual of all. The working classes have now a power which, if rightly directed and fully utilised, might do an immense amount of good. The most striking exhibition of that power is to be witnessed in their enormous trades unions and world-wide confederations. At present, however, it is power largely wasted, because applied too exclusively to organisation for war, and too often expended in war which only leads to disaster because it is war against natural law, war which ignores the difference between the possible and the impossible. Were it to a greater extent applied to organisation, not merely for the increase of wages, but for the general betterment of the condition of workmen, it would be far less wasteful and far more fruitful. It would not be so often expended in war, but it would be much stronger for all just and necessary war. Were the unions and confederations created by it more educative, and more truly democratic in the sense of being more really self-governing and less dependent on the advice and guidance of a few leaders, were they in closer and more amicable relations with the associations and alliances of their employers, and were they more occupied in seeking the general economic, intellectual, and moral improvement of their members, they would be highly beneficent agencies. Although there are certainly few signs just now of their purposing to move on these lines, we should not despair that good counsel, reflection, and the teaching of experience will in time bring them to perceive that such are the only safe ones.

No absolute distinction can be drawn between political and social questions. Political questions are social questions, and the measure of their importance is the extent to which they affect the condition and character of society.

The man who fancies that the Church ought to have nothing to do with politics cannot have thought much on the subject. The Church has to do with the Bible, and the Bible is a very political book. The history recorded in Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles may be called "sacred history," but it is in the main as much political history as that narrated by Herodotus, Tacitus, or Froude. The prophets preached politics so very largely that no man can expound what they uttered and apply it without preaching politics also.

To lecture through the Epistle of James without trenching on the sphere of politics one would require to be not merely adroit but dishonest. It is true that Christ's kingdom "is not of this world," but it is also true that Christ is "prince of the kings of the earth," and consequently that all political rulers and political assemblies are as much bound to obey His will as ecclesiastical leaders and ecclesiastical councils. Political morality is conformity in certain relations to the divine law which the Church has been instituted to make known and to get honoured in all relations. The Church has, therefore, very much to do with politics. She has to do with it in so far as politics may be moral or immoral, Christian or anti-Christian; in so far as there is national duty or national sin, national piety or national impiety.

The Church, however, has not to do with politics in the same way in which the State has. It is not her province to deal with political measures in themselves. The clergy must not thrust themselves into the business of politicians. They are only entitled to watch how the activity of the politician is related to the law of Christ, to inculcate the "righteousness that exalts a people," and to denounce "the sin which is the reproach of nations." But that they are bound to do; and they may render great service to society by faithfully doing it. There would be less political immorality were political sins more certain of being rebuked. If, when murder was stalking through the south and west of Ireland, the clergy of Britain had generally proclaimed as pointedly the obligatoriness of the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" as one of them, Professor Wace, did, politicians of all kinds would soon have had their eyes opened to see that they could not hope to make capital out of crime, and Britain would not have been burdened with nearly so heavy a load of blood-guiltiness. It is a great misfortune for a people when it has no prophets of the old Hebrew stamp to arouse its conscience by confronting it with the divine law.

The Church is bound to do her utmost to make the State moral and Christian. This requires her to maintain her own independence; to take no part in questions of merely party politics; to keep free if possible from the very suspicion of political partisanship; and to confine her efforts, when acting within the political sphere, to endeavouring to get the law of her Lord honoured and obeyed in national and public life. She must be subject or bound to no

party, but rise above all parties, in order that she may be able to instruct, to correct, and to rebuke them all with disinterestedness and effectiveness. When she fully realises this necessity, and acts accordingly, her political influence, far from being lessened, will be greatly increased. It is only when she throws off all political bondage, keeps herself free from the contamination of what is base and corrupt in political life, and stands forth as instituted and commissioned by God to declare His saving truth and righteous will to all men without respect of persons, that she can with the necessary authority and weight condemn all sacrifice of truth to expediency, of morality to success, and of the welfare of a nation, or the advancement of Christianity, or the good of mankind, to the advantage of a party, or the triumph of a sect, or the mean ends of individuals or classes. Only then will she fully exert the immense power with which she has been entrusted for the healing of the nations, for the regeneration and renovation of society. And then, too, the world will be forced to recognise its indebtedness to her, to acknowledge that she has received manifold gifts for men which are indispensable to the welfare of society, that she can render to the State far greater advantages than the State can confer upon her, that she can bring to bear upon the hostile parties in a community a moderating, elevating, and harmonising influence peculiar to herself, that she can touch deeper springs of feeling and of conviction than any merely secular power can reach, and thereby do more to purify public life, and, in a word, that her mission is so wonderfully adapted to meet human wants that it must indeed be divine.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

THE CHURCH'S CALL TO STUDY SOCIAL QUESTIONS

The following remarks of the author on this subject have already appeared in print. They are reprinted here because of their close connection with the concluding portion of the chapter.

"The call of the Church to study social questions is not a new one, except so far in form. In substance it is as old as the Church itself. The teaching of Christ and of the Apostles was the setting forth of a Gospel intimately related to the society in which it appeared, and vitally affecting the whole future of the society which was to be. The Church may find in the study of the New Testament the same sort of guidance for its social activity as an individual minister may find in it for the right performance of his pulpit or pastoral duty.

"Just as in the New Testament there are the all-comprehensive and inexhaustibly fruitful germs of a perfect doctrine of the ministry of the Word, and of the pastoral care, so are there of a perfect doctrine of the social mission of the Church. Indeed, the Sermon on the Mount alone contains far more of light fitted to dispel social darkness, and far more of the saving virtue which society needs, than any individual mind can ever fully apprehend, or than the Church universal has yet apprehended.

"If the call of which I have to speak were not thus old as well as new, if it were not a call inherent in the very nature of the Gospel, and implied in the very end of the existence of a Church on earth, if it summoned the ministers of the Word away from the work which Christ had assigned to them, if it required them to discard their divinely-inspired text-book, it could hardly be a true one, and ministers might well doubt if it could be incumbent on them to listen to it. But it is no such call. For, although it is one which summons us to reflect on what is required of us in the circumstances of the present hour—one which is repeated to us by God's providence daily in events happening around us and pressing themselves on our attention—it is also one which comes down to us through the ages from Him who lived and suffered and died in Palestine centuries ago, in order that, as God was in Him, and He in God, all men might be one in Him.

"The call is so distinct that the Church has never been entirely deaf to it. Originating as it did in the love of Christ to mankind, it necessarily brought with it into the world a new ideal of social duty; and it has never ceased to endeavour, more or less faithfully, to relieve the misery and to redress the wrongs under which it found society suffering. In the early Christian centuries, in the time of the fall of the Roman Empire and the formation of the mediæval world, in the so-called "ages of faith," and the epoch of the foundation of modern States, and in all periods since, the Church has had a social mission varying with the characteristics and wants of each time, and may fairly claim to have largely contributed to the solutions which the social problems of the times received. And a zeal guided by prudence, a wise activity in the social sphere, has never done the Church anything but good. When the Church has kept itself to itself, when it has shut itself up in its own theological schools, divided itself into sects mainly interested in opposing one another, and confined its work within congregational and parochial limits; in a word, when it has cultivated an exclusive and narrow spirit, then it has been proportionately unfaithful, disputatious, and barren; its theology has been lifeless and unprogressive, its ministry of the Word sapless and ineffective, and the types of piety and of character which it has produced have been poor and unattractive. In the measure in which the Church is a power for good on earth will it prove a power which draws men to heaven.

"The call of the Church to study social questions has its chief ground or reason in this, that the influence of the Church, if brought rightly and fully to bear on society, must be incalculably beneficial to it. There is no power in the world which can do so much for society as the Church, if pure, united, and zealous, if animated with the mind of Christ, and endowed with the graces of the spirit.

"The State can, of course, do for society what the Church cannot do, and has no right even to try to do; but it cannot do for society more than, or even as much as, the Church may do, and should do. The power of the State, just because the more external and superficial, may seem the greater, but is really the lesser. Spiritual force is mightier than material force. Rule over the affections of the heart is far more decisive and wide-reaching than rule over the actions of the body.

"The Church, if it does not destroy its own influence by unreasonableness, selfishness, contentiousness, departure from the truth as it is in Christ, and conformity to the world, will naturally, and in the long run inevitably, rule society and rule the State; and that for the simple reason that it ought to rule them—ought to bring them into subjection to those principles of religion and of morality on which their life and welfare are dependent.

"Of course, if the Church is untrue to itself, unfaithful to its Lord, it will do harm in society just in proportion to the good which it might and ought to do. The corruption of the best is the worst.

"In the truths which it was instituted to inculcate, the Church has inexhaustible resources for the benefiting of society, which ought to be wisely and devotedly used.

"Was it not instituted, for example, to spread through society the conviction that the supreme ruler of society is God over all; that the prince of the kings of the earth is the Lord Christ Jesus; that the perfect law of God as revealed in Christ ought to underlie all the laws which monarchs and parliaments make; and that whatever law contradicts His law is one to be got rid of as soon as possible, and brought into consistency with His eternal statutes?

"Well, what other real security has society for its freedom than just that conviction? What other sure defence against the tyranny of kings or parliaments, of majorities or mobs? I know of none. The only way for a people to be free is to have a firm faith in God's sovereignty, in Christ's headship, over the nations; a firm faith that in all things it is right to obey God rather than man; that the true and supreme law of a people cannot be the will of a man, or of a body of men, or of the majority of men, or of those who happen for the time to have physical force on their side, but only the will of God, the law at once of righteousness and of liberty.

"The God in Whom the Christian Church believes, moreover, is

not only God over all, but God the Father of all; God Who loves all with an equal and impartial love, and Whose love, in seeking the love of all men and the good of all men, seeks also that they should love one another and promote each other's good. The Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men are truths which the Church is bound to endeavour fully to impress on the mind and heart of society; and obviously the welfare of society depends on the success with which this is effected.

"Further, the Church has been instituted to commend to the consciences of mankind the claims of a moral law, comprehensive and perfect so far as its principles are concerned; a law which does justice to the rights and requirements both of the individual and of society, and therefore is free from the faults alike of individualism and of socialism; one which lays the foundations of a rightly constituted family life and of just and beneficent government; and which overlooks not even the least of those virtues on which the economic welfare of a community and of its members so much depends. And to give life and force to the injunctions of this law, so that they may be no mere verbal precepts, but full of divine fire and efficacy, they are connected with the greatest and most impressive facts,—the mercies of God, the work and example of Christ, and the aid and indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

"Does the Church commend this law in all its breadth, and by all the motives which enforce it, as wisely, earnestly, and effectively as it might? I fear not altogether; and yet there is great need that it should; for, if not, there is no other body, no other society, that will. Take even those humble yet most essential virtues to which I have just referred under the name of economic—those personal qualities which make a man's labour more valuable both to himself and others than it would otherwise be, and which further ensure that whatever his wages may be they will not be foolishly or unworthily spent. Are they not apt to be overlooked in our teaching, although they were certainly not overlooked in that of the Apostles? Yet who will do them justice if ministers of the Gospel do not? Will it be socialist orators like those in Hyde Park or Glasgow Green, or gentlemen in quest of workmen's votes to help them into Parliament, or otherwise to raise them to prominence and power? I trow not. They will willingly leave that task to the clergy; and I think the clergy had better do it, and as lovingly, yet as faithfully, as they can. Political economists, indeed, may show, and have abundantly shown, the economic importance of the virtues referred to both as regards individuals and societies; but that, although all that political economists can relevantly do, is not enough; while Christian ministers can bring to the enforcement even of these virtues far higher and more effective considerations.

"I hasten to add that the Church of Christ has been set up to show forth to mankind a kingdom of God which is both in heaven and on earth. Among multitudes of Socialists there is a quite special hatred against faith in a heavenly kingdom. It is the opium, they say, by which the peoples have been cast into sleep, and prevented from asserting and taking possession of their rights. Exclaims one of them—'When a heaven hereafter is recognised as a big lie, men will attempt to establish heaven here.' Thousands of them have uttered the same thought in other words. Oh, strange and sad delusion! If a heaven hereafter be a big lie, what reason can we have to expect that there will ever be a heaven here? A merely earthly paradise can only be a fool's paradise. Earth is all covered with darkness when not seen in the light of a heaven above it. The preachers of past days, perhaps, erred by laying almost exclusive stress on the kingdom of God in heaven. The preachers of the present day may err by laying too exclusive stress on the coming of the kingdom of God on earth, and so leading some to believe that the secularist Socialists may be right, and that there may be no other heaven than one which men can make for themselves here.

"The great and continuous call of the Church to study social questions arises from her having been entrusted with such powers to act on society, to regenerate and reform, to quicken and elevate society, as I have now indicated. The right application of them is essential to the welfare of society; but such application of them supposes the most patient and careful and prayerful study, the most intimate and living acquaintance with the Gospel on the one hand, and the most thorough insight into the requirements of society on the other, and, in a high degree, the knowledge and the prudence which inform a man when and what to speak, how to say just enough and to refrain from adding what will weaken or wholly destroy its effect. Bishop Westcott's "Social Aspects of Christianity," and Dr. Donald Macleod's "Christ and Society," are greatly more valuable than they would have been if their authors had shown a less exquisite sense of knowing always where to stop; and such a sense, only attainable in due measure by assiduous thoughtfulness, is probably even more necessary in addressing congregations composed of the poor and labouring classes than those which meet in Westminster Abbey or the Park Church.

"While there has always been a call on the Church to study social questions, there is likewise, however, a special call on the Church of the present day to do so. For, indubitably, all over Christendom there is a vast amount of social rest and unrest. The conflict between labour and capital is one of chronic war, of violent and passionate struggles, which too often produce widespread waste and misery. And closely connected with it is a vast irreligious and revolutionary movement, which sees in Christianity its bitterest foe, and aims at

destroying it along with social order and private property. This irreligious and revolutionary movement is to a considerable extent the effect of the conflict between labour and capital, but it is to an even greater extent its cause.

"The matter standing thus, there is a most urgent call on the Church to study how to bring all the powers of the Gospel to bear against whatever is wrong in society, and on the stimulation and strengthening of all that is good in it. Thoughtfulness need not lessen or counteract zeal; it should accompany, enlighten, and assist zeal. If there be an urgent and strong call that the Church in present circumstances should endeavour to act, with all the power with which God has endowed her, for the purification and salvation of society, there must be a correspondingly urgent and strong call for her to study how she may most fully and effectively do so."*

* Scottish Church Society Conferences. First Series. Pp. 65-72. Edinburgh, 1894.

APPENDIX

The Official Programmes of The Principal Socialistic Organisations

(These Organisations have been referred to at pages 35-37.)

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION OR SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

OBJECT

THE socialisation of the means of production, distribution, and exchange to be controlled by a democratic state in the interests of the entire community, and the complete emancipation of labour from the domination of capitalism and landlordism, with the establishment of social and economic equality between the sexes.

IMMEDIATE REFORMS

Political

Abolition of the monarchy.

Democratisation of the Governmental machinery, viz.: abolition of the House of Lords, payment of members of legislative and administrative bodies, payment of official expenses of elections out of the public funds, adult suffrage, proportional representation, triennial parliaments, second ballot, initiative, and referendum. Foreigners to be granted rights of citizenship after two years' residence in the country, on the recommendation of four British-born citizens, without any fees.

Canvassing to be made illegal.

Legislation by the people in such wise that no legislative proposal shall become law until ratified by the majority of the people.

Legislative and administrative independence for all parts of the Empire.

Financial and Fiscal

Repudiation of the National Debt.

Abolition of all indirect taxation, and the institution of a cumulative tax on all incomes and inheritances exceeding £300.

Administrative

Extension of the principle of local self-government.

Systematisation and co-ordination of the local administrative bodies.

Election of all administrators and administrative bodies by equal direct adult suffrage.

Educational

Elementary education to be free, secular, industrial, and compulsory for all classes. The age of obligatory school attendance to be raised to sixteen.

Unification and systematisation of intermediate and higher education, both general and technical, and all such education to be free.

Free maintenance for all attending State schools.

Abolition of school rates; the cost of education in all State schools to be borne by the National Exchequer.

Public Monopolies and Services

Nationalisation of the land and the organisation of labour in agriculture and industry under public ownership and control on co-operative principles.

Nationalisation of the trusts.

Nationalisation of railways, docks, and canals, and all great means of transit.

Public ownership and control of gas, electric light, and water supplies, as well as of tramway, omnibus, and other locomotive services.

Public ownership and control of the food and coal supply.

The establishment of State and municipal banks and pawnshops and public restaurants.

Public ownership and control of the lifeboat service.

Public ownership and control of hospitals, dispensaries, cemeteries, and crematoria.

Public ownership and control of the drink traffic.

Labour

A legislative eight-hour working day, or forty-eight hours per week, to be the maximum for all trades and industries. Imprisonment to be inflicted on employers for any infringement of the law.

Absolute freedom of combination for all workers, with legal guarantee against any action, private or public, which tends to entail or infringe it.

No child to be employed in any trade or occupation until sixteen years of age, and imprisonment to be inflicted on employers, parents, and guardians who infringe this law.

Public provision of useful work at not less than trade-union rates of wages for the unemployed.

Free State insurance against sickness and accident, and free and adequate State pensions or provision for aged and disabled workers.

Public assistance not to entail any forfeiture of political rights.

The legislative enactment of a minimum wage of 30s. for all workers. Equal pay for both sexes for the performance of equal work.

Social

Abolition of the present workhouse system, and reformed administration of the Poor Law on a basis of national co-operation.

Compulsory construction by public bodies of healthy dwellings for the people; such dwellings to be let at rents to cover the cost of

construction and maintenance alone, and not to cover the cost of the land.

The administration of justice to be free to all; the establishment of public offices where legal advice can be obtained free of charge.

Miscellaneous

The disestablishment and disendowment of all State churches.

The abolition of standing armies, and the establishment of national citizen forces. The people to decide on peace and war.

The establishment of international courts of arbitration.

The abolition of courts-martial; all offences against discipline to be transferred to the jurisdiction of civil courts.

THE FABIAN SOCIETY

Basis

The Fabian Society consists of Socialists.

It therefore aims at the reorganisation of Society by the emancipation of Land and Industrial Capital from individual and class ownership, and the vesting of them in the community for the general benefit. In this way only can the natural and acquired advantages of the country be equitably shared by the whole people.

The Society accordingly works for the extinction of private property in Land, and of the consequent individual appropriation, in the form of Rent, of the price paid for permission to use the earth, as well as for the advantages of superior soils and sites.

The Society, further, works for the transfer to the community of the administration of such industrial Capital as can conveniently be managed socially. For, owing to the monopoly of the means of production in the past, industrial inventions and the transformation of surplus income into Capital have mainly enriched the proprietary class, the worker being now dependent on that class for leave to earn a living.

If these measures be carried out, without compensation (though not without such relief to expropriated individuals as may seem fit to the community), Rent and Interest will be added to the reward of labour, the idle class now living on the labour of others will necessarily disappear, and practical equality of opportunity will be maintained by the spontaneous action of economic forces with much less interference with personal liberty than the present system entails.

For the attainment of these ends the Fabian Society looks to the spread of socialist opinions, and the social and political changes consequent thereon, including the establishment of equal citizenship for men and women. It seeks to achieve these ends by the general dissemination of knowledge as to the relation between the individual and Society in its economic, ethical, and political aspects.

THE INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY

Object

An industrial commonwealth founded upon the socialisation of land and capital.

Methods

The education of the community in the principles of Socialism.
The industrial and political organisation of the workers.
The independent representation of socialist principles on all elective bodies.

Programme

The true object of industry being the production of the requirements of life, the responsibility should rest with the community collectively, therefore :

The land, being the storehouse of all the necessaries of life, should be declared and treated as public property.

The capital necessary for industrial operations should be owned and used collectively.

Work, and wealth resulting therefrom, should be equitably distributed over the population.

As a means to this end, we demand the enactment of the following measures :

(1) A maximum of forty-eight hours' working week, with the retention of all existing holidays, and Labour Day, May 1st, secured by law.

(2) The provision of work to all capable adult applicants at recognised trades union rates, with a statutory minimum of sixpence per hour.

In order to remuneratively (*sic*) employ the applicants, Parish, District, Borough, and County Councils to be invested with powers to :

(*a*) Organise and undertake such industries as they may consider desirable.

(*b*) Compulsorily acquire land ; purchase, erect, or manufacture buildings, stock, or other articles for carrying on such industries.

(*c*) Levy rates on the rental values of the district, and borrow money on the security of such rates for any of the above purposes.

(3) State pensions for every person over fifty years of age, and adequate provision for all widows, orphans, sick, and disabled workers.

(4) Free secular, moral, primary, secondary, and university education with free maintenance while at school or university.

(5) The raising of the age of child labour, with a view to its ultimate extinction.

(6) Municipalisation and public control of the drink traffic.

(7) Municipalisation and public control of all hospitals and infirmaries.

(8) Abolition of indirect taxation and the gradual transference of all public burdens on to unearned incomes with a view to their ultimate extinction.

The Independent Labour Party is in favour of adult suffrage, with full political rights and privileges for women, and the immediate extension of the franchise to women on the same terms as granted to men ; also triennial parliaments and second ballot.

THE LABOUR PARTY

This section of the socialistic party has no official programme, but its objects must be learned, year by year, from the statements issued by the association.

THE CHRISTIAN SOCIAL UNION.

The Union consists of members of the Church of England who have the following objects at heart :

(1) To claim for the Christian law the ultimate authority to rule social practice.

(2) To study in common how to apply the moral truths and principles of Christianity to the social and economic difficulties of the present time.

(3) To present Christ in practical life as the living Master and King, the enemy of wrong and selfishness, the power of righteousness and love.

THE GUILD OF ST. MATTHEW

Objects

(1) To get rid, by every possible means, of the existing prejudices, especially on the part of Secularists, against the Church, her sacraments, and her doctrines ; and to endeavour to " justify God to the people."

(2) To promote frequent and reverent worship in the Holy Communion, and a better observance of the teaching of the Church of England as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer.

(3) To promote the study of social and political questions in the light of the Incarnation.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

Object

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

Declaration of Principles

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds that society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (*i.e.*, land, factories, railways, etc.), by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that the machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation, and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be brought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

THE CHURCH SOCIALIST LEAGUE

Principles

(1) The Church has a mission to the whole of human life, social and individual, material and spiritual.

(2) The Church can best fulfil its social mission by acting together in its corporate capacity.

(3) To this end the members of the League accept the principles of Socialism.

Object

To secure the corporate action of the Church on these principles.

Method

(1) To cultivate by the regular use of prayer and sacraments the life of brotherhood.

(2) Members undertake to help each other in fulfilling the object of the League by speaking and lecturing, and in other ways.

(3) Members shall co-operate as far as possible to secure the consideration of social questions at their various ruridecanal and diocesan conferences and the election of Socialists on these and other representative bodies.

(4) Members should work for the disestablishment of the patron and the substitution of the Church in each parish in conjunction with the Church in the diocese in the patron's place.

(5) To secure the representation of the wage-earning classes upon all the representative bodies of the Church.

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